

REFLECTIONS
UPON THE
Eloquence
OF
THESE TIMES;
Particularly of the
BARR
AND
PULPIT.

[René Rapin.]

L O N D O N,

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1672.

REFLECTIONS

UPON THE

ETERNAL

OF

THESE THINGS

AND

THE

WORLD

AND

THE

1675

THE
EPISTLE

TO HIS
Ingenious Friend T. B.

SIR,

Eloquence is so natural to
persons of your House,
that it is difficult to form
any Ideas, but what you
have already conceived; or to
write any thing upon this glorious
Subject, that you have not perfectly
considered. All the world knows,
that it was this Eloquence, joyned
with a great Capacity, with a Pro-
bity yet more great, and with all
those Vertues which *Quintilian*
gives for its companions, which
hath advanced your Father to the
first preferments in the Church, and

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who yet attracts the admiration of of this renowned Kingdom. The chiefest glory that you have acquired in pursuing such noble paths, you have obtained from Eloquence: It is to her that you owe those great praises, that you have merited in your first fall into the World. For this cause, Sir, the Reflections that I present you belong most justly to your self; do you protect them, Sir, and it will render them more acceptable to those who read them: For who can refuse to read, or give their approbation to what appears authorized by a name so auspicious to Eloquence as yours is?

How oft, Sir, have I admir'd that solid Spirit, that excellent Judgment, that vast and illuminated understanding, which you have in all things, and in which you are so very much distinguish'd from all those that are considerable, upon the
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Dedicatory.

the account of their vertue and great qualities? But as you aspire not to any other reputation, but what flows, mixt with pleasure, from an honourable discharge of your sacred Function, I forbear to make a further discovery of what all the world observes in you, & which all your modesty cannot conceal: Yet how would the Publick accuse me, if out of fear of wounding your modesty, I should neglect to speak of that unexampled moderation which you have witnessed in the flower of your Age, in renouncing all things, to apply your self only to copy, even to the least Tracts, from that admirable Model which you have perpetually before your eyes.

It is there Sir, that you find an inexhaustible fountain of bounty, of Knowledge, and of Piety, which are not to be met elsewhere. How infinitely above others are you ren-

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dred capable of all these excellences by a Study such as that is, and by an imitation of such a Father? O what a happiness is it, to have a domestick example, which alone includes all others!

It is not Fortune alone that distributes these advantages; there is required vertue, which must be as naturalized in a Family to merit these favours of Heaven. I have said perhaps too much for a man that desires not to be known: For it is not enough to conceal my name, but I should also have conceal'd my Zeal, and contented my self that you know who I am, and with what passion I am, Sir,

*Your very humble and
obedient Servant,*

N. N.

THE
Epistle
TO THE
READER.



That Eloquence which rendered the possessors of it so illustrious in the happy age of Augustus, and in that of his Immortal Predecessors Has now lost all its wonted Charms, and natural Beauties. The nobleness of its end, and dignity of its use, is so little preserved in this vain and voluptuous Age, that it is no wonder to see it degenerated into a thing meerly superficial. We labour in the composition of Perfumes, and our cares are only scrupulous

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scrupulous in the disposition of Words, and an arrangement of Sentences, with a beautiful variety of Periods; we commonly hunt after glistening Metaphors, and making choice of expressions, which go to the pomp and ostentation of our Language, even sometimes to the contempt and ruine of Piety, whilst we neglect, out of a sloathful impatience, what goes to the essence of it. True Eloquence consists not in the number of Syllables, nor in a musical ordering of Dactyles or Spondees to make up harmony. Of which kind was that Oration of Ovid, which Seneca calls solutum Carmen. Alas, how miserably do they mistake, who make it consist in a few fugitive words. True Eloquence is a thing that survives in the most ingrateful Memories, and makes its passage into the most secret parts of Man, descends to the bottom of his heart, and pierces even to the Center of the soul: It is above the scrupulous Precepts of Grammar-

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Grammarians. Priscian has no longer any Jurisdiction over us; nor are his Precepts of more force to us than the Edicts of the Great Mogul. The Compilers of common places, the Copiers of others Rhetoricks, or the Translators of some Chapters of Quintilian, are not of the number of those who do successfully attach or captivate the Soul; they may have their Faction, and be satisfied with their applauses, but yet all their victories are only in Picture, their triumphs in Masquerade, and all their false miracles but a shadow. The world is so far become reasonable, as that pedantry has lost its credit, even in the Universities. Their travel is to be pittied, who are busied in the gathering and tying together of Flowers, and decking their declamations in affected Ornaments, which only surprize the Ignorant and the Vulgar. True Eloquence has the mean of an Amazon, rather than of a Wanton; she is not so curious of her Ornaments,

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Ornaments, as of her *Armes*, and had rather gain the soul by an entire victory, than debauch it for a few hours by a light satisfaction; all her charms are the charms of a *Majestick Beauty*, which only triumphs over great Souls, and dazle not the Imprudent by a borrowed and affected lustre. It must well considered, that, besides the knowledge of all Sciences, an Orator must be acquainted with all the different avenues to the seat of Reason; he must perfectly know the strength and weakness of humane spirit, and those parts of the soul that are most pregnable. I have often blushed with indignation at the reading of some of our Late Writers; so much are also their styles vitiated and depraved: and to see so few Imitators of that vigorous and majestick stile of our illustrious Bacon, which was the legitimate off-spring of his fine pregnant and powerful Imagination. As on the Stage, Farce has supplanted Comedy,

To the Reader.

Comedy, so in the Press the lascivious and burlesque hath usurp'd upon the grave and modest. And what is most deplorable, we have seen the holy Scripture it self debased by an impudent and ambitious Jargon; and even those Authors which pass for the most polished, the most elaborate Discourses, are but nugæ canoræ, Six words are oftentimes cramed with twelve figures, and all their Sentences pompous and magnificent; but that Magnificence is so far removed from sobriety, and the Majesty of an Oratory stile, that the most rash and prodigal Poésie has nothing more licentious. The most of our young Orators, as well as Poets, are distempered by this wild and extravagant fury. In others we find an inequality, which renders their discourses monstrous; sometimes they are elevated with a precipitation approaching to fury; and other sometimes depressed so low, that their stiles become flat and distasteful,

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Seneca.

ful, whereas it ought to be continued in a constant equality and sweetness. Non est formosa cujus crux laudatur, aut brachium, sed illa cujus universa facies admirationem singulis partibus abstulit. The Clergy, Sir, are not wholly exempt from failings; their Eloquence is properly Pagan, which proceeds from the reading of certain Authors, which has so imbued their minds with their Ideas, that they cannot forbear them in matters the most Religious; how many thinking it better to say the Christian Perswasion than the Christian Faith, &c. Know Reader, that notwithstanding what I have said, that I am so far from despising or undervaluing Elocution, that I praise, and admire it in whomsoever I find it; and I am as much in love with elegant words and noble expressions, which may adorn our Language, as any are: But yet, with Quintilian, I would have them serve to unfold a sense

To the Reader

sence yet more considerable. Curam ego verborum, rerum volo esse sollicitudinem ; A too great care of words, and their disposition is equally blameable, with a too great neglect. I am very sensible, that he who appears in Print, let the cause, as to himself, be never so good, profitable, or commendable, exposes himself to censure ; yet I cannot forbear to urge the general importance of the Subject in excuse of my pains. I know it cannot be unseasonable in a time when our own Clergy are still wrestling with the reproaches that have been lately cast upon them upon this account. Yet I must needs say, that had the stile of that Author been more modest and respectful, he might have escaped the confusion of being seen in the Press the second time less to his advantage. Instructions are entertained with effect, when they are not too personally address'd : We may with civility glance at, but cannot, without rudeness and

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and ill manners, stare upon the faults or imperfections of any man: And I think every man ought to be offended with himself, who violates that religious respect which they owe to the Church and Churchmen.

ERRATA.

PPage 6. Line 12. for *fine active Spirits*, read *fine and active Spirits*: and l. 15. f. *this* r. *it is*. P. 13. l. 15. f. *as a skilful Painter knows*, r. *as a skilful Painter who knows*. P. 14. l. 20. f. *that the extremity and heat*, r. *that in these extremities the heat*. P. 15. l. the last. f. *Escheres* r. *Eschenes*. P. 24. l. 16. f. *his Spirit* r. *our Spirit*. P. 63. l. 23. f. *dicerenter* r. *dicerentur*. P. 80. l. 17. f. *amongst us* r. *among them*. P. 88. l. 4. f. *some tincture* r. *some tinnzure of Antiquity*. P. 116. l. 19. f. *pains* r. *pain*. P. 131. f. *minds* r. *means*. l. 14.

REFLECTIONS
UPON THE
Eloquence
OF THESE
TIMES.



Though true Elo-
quence hath a pow-
er more absolute
than Authority, or
Violence, to which
we do not usually
submit our selves more than in Ce-
remony and with constraint; yet
its powers are subject to revoluti-

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ons and declinations, as all other things are: For we have much pain in these times to find any remainder of that Empire which it exercised upon the Spirits of men, and whereof there appear'd so many glorious marks in those Ages and States where she hath rul'd. We must not now expect such miracles of Elocution, nor such excellent works of Discourse, as have received birth in *Athens* and *Rome*, when Eloquence was there the Mistress universally ador'd.

Let us not boast our selves upon the pretended Glory of our Age, which we prefer to all others, without a due deliberation; for at this day, who is the Orator that can be Master of the resolution of those to whom he speaks, and force them to divest their pre-occupations, and renounce their Sentiments? We have heretofore seen Eloquence in a short moment restore a
Calm

Calm in the most violent agitations of a people moved and mutinous: We have seen it in the confused deliberations of a tumultuous Assembly, to make impressions unhoped for upon their Spirits, and to appease their Seditions by inspiring the most fearful with Courage, and disarming the insolent and revolted, and constraining both to follow blindly her Counsels: We have seen her also in Arms, in the shape of *Pallas*, fly from Rank to Rank, and restore heart to fainting and flying Souldiers; and in fine, to triumph amidst the Armies of those whom she hath vanquish'd by her Reasons.

But to speak truly, at the present, we have only remaining a vain Phantome of that victorious Eloquence, which we now possess not but in *Idea*. Let us examine then from whence comes this Disorder in a time wherein we have so much Spirit.

§. I.

A *Aristotle*, *Cicero*, *Quintilian*, and *Longinus*, which have left us Treatises of *Rhetorick*, the most accomplish'd of Antiquity, remark that that Eloquence which they had seen sometimes in *Athens* and in *Rome*, before that these Republicks had lost their liberty, could not rule then amongst a People free and Independent: She is a fierce and haughty Mistress, who cannot be made subject to Vassalage or Flattery: She seems to bear in her Character that of a Monarchy, which cannot submit without destroying it self: And *Aristotle* observes that she had not any success in *Sicily*, during that the Tyrants were their Masters, when all other Arts continued there and flourished. This was the opinion of these great men, who

who were very able to judge of the truth, though they licensed themselves to speak something in favour of the Government wherein they had been advanced.

§. 2.

As the Honours that *Greece* rendered to Eloquence, made it considerable amongst other Nations, and the success it had at *Rome* was by the great rewards which were proposed; so her Credit ceased there, when her Recompences were taken away. We must not then be astonished, (the Fruit which we gain from this Art, being now so disproportionate to the travel and application that it demands) if we find so few Orators so courageous as to sustain the Fatigue, especially when it is not attended with so much Honour.

Sibi persuaserunt neminem sine eloquentia, aut assequi posse in Civitate, aut tueri conspicuum & eminentem locum: De caus. corrup. Eloq.

tended by any hopes which smile either on their Interest or Ambition. Eloquence was the means to attain to the greatest Honours in those Estates in which she had Dominion; but in these times there is little or nothing to be obtained by the same way: This alone is capable to extinguish that generous ardeur and study which is necessary to Eloquence, and to rebate the most fine^d active Spirits.

§. 3.

That greatness of Genius which Eloquence requires, and which we search after, is now no more to be found: This is a gift of Heaven, and a work of many Ages; for besides a happy birth for the pronunciation, the sole Assembly of Natural Qualities requir'd to succeed in this Art of Speech, is extreamly rare; there is required an extraordinary

dinary elevation of Spirit, a great judgment formed by a natural solidity, to which the usage of the world, and a profound knowledge of Letters, must give perfection: There is also required a vast Memory, and an extended Imagination, an easie Comprehension, a Voice clear and distinct, a Visage that hath nothing of forbidding, a Pronunciation fine and animated, joyned with an Air of Authority; and many other Qualities, which being usually incompatible of themselves, are very difficultly found all together assembled: 'Tis this that gave cause to *Cicero* to complain, in his time, when Eloquence was so flourishing, that he could not without great trouble find in that Age, two Orators that merited esteem; yet this is no reason but that they may be found now as well as at other times; for Nature is as liberal of her gifts in these last times, as

Cernimus
vix singu-
lis ætati-
bus binos
Oratores
laudabiles
exstitisse.
De Orat.

she was in the first; but ordinarily we have not so much light, to know in our selves those qualities, when they are there; or sufficient care or application to cultivate them; so that they are there, as if they were not at all.

¶ 4.

Besides this natural disposition, there is required to be eloquent, a great capacity, and a great application. These were the three things which rendred the Eloquence of *Brutus*, which *Cicero* praised so much, so very accomplish'd: There must be a great Attachment to study, and an extraordinary diligence at the Cabinet to replenish the Spirit with knowledges necessary to Eloquence. It is good to draw from the Sources, to study to the bottom

Erat in
Bruto natu-
ra admi-
bilis exqui-
sita doctri-
na, & indu-
stria singu-
laris. De
clar. Orat.

bottom the Ancients, principally those which are original ; and in fine, to make a Subject of our perpetual Meditation the Rhetorick of *Aristotle*, who hath taken the care to expose so exactly all the particular motions of mans heart. The Orator ought to make the chief end of his Study to move the Souls of his Auditors by the movement of his Affections, which are the true resorts of this Machine, which is so difficult to enflame, when we bestow no time in the study of them.

Without this knowledge an Orator is in a condition to determine nothing, nor to obtain the attention of an Oracle, which he must ordinarily be esteemed ; nor can his spirit be capable of any reasonable production, according to the opinion of the judicious Critick, *Neque concipere, neque edere partum mens potest, nisi ingenti*

Reflections

ti flumine literarum undata. By what means can he enlighten others, if he himself be not enlightened? or how can he perswade, if himself be not perswaded? And who is there now who can sustain the travel of a study so *opiniastre*, and of a perseverance so great, as must be that of the Orator, who must be ignorant of nothing?

§. 5.

The true Eloquence being so difficult to acquire, we think at least to recompense it by the appearances of a false Eloquence, which had its first course amongst the *Greeks* and *Latines*, in the declinings of their Republicks, which never had any subsistence or entertainment than in the servitude of these Nations. The *Sophists*, whose Lives *Philostratus* and *Eunapius* have describ'd, establish'd in their
pub-

upon Eloquence.

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publick places, this false eloquence, which gives all to the exterior part by aiery and wandring Discourse, and hath no other tendency, than to amuse the people: but as this Eloquence has nothing of natural, the Figures themselves and the Ornaments serve only to render it more weak.

All its Movements are false; it touches not at all the heart, nor enters in any manner into the Spirit; all that it gives, is a pleasure superficial, and is no more than a simple pastime for the foolish and idle. But as it is easie to mistake universally the false for the true; for the former quickly offers it self to the Spirit; but the latter is not found than with study and with care: the first is immense by the multiplicity of its appearances, which serve to disguise it; whereas the other has none, and consists in some kind in a point indivisible:

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We ought not to be astonished if we take Appearance for Truth in Eloquence, as in other things; but when we arrive to true discernment, we find that there is little of true Eloquence or perfect Oratory; and that the most part of those which speak in public, are no other than pure Declamators.

§. 6.

We exercise not our selves to obtain this Eloquence in the way that is most ordinary, and sure to succeed in the pursuit, that is, frequent exercise in composition, to which we must apply our selves with no little assiduity to acquire a habitude; for nothing is equal to the advantage we receive by it: It was by this way that *Demosthenes* and *Cicero* are come to that degree of perfection which every one knows; and without speaking of the first

Nullares
ad di-
cendum
proficit
quantum
scriptio.
Cic. su Brut.

upon Eloquence.

13

first who spent so many years in that
acquest ; no person is ignorant that
the latter employ'd all his leisure
which his Affairs allow'd him, to
exercise himself to speak well, by
this frequent use of Composition.

Caput est
quod mini
me faci
mus ; est
enim mag
ni laboris
quod su
gimus

quam plurimum scribere, De Orat.

§. 7.

We study not to speak things cor
rectly, nor to make our Images and
Portraits equal ; we speak usually
too much or too little ; the Mean
that we must hold, is known to ve
ry few persons, for that it is almost
imperceptible ; to attain which
Knowledge, we have but very few
Rules. And as a skilful Painter
knows how to distinguish Passions
in different Subjects wherein he is
to express them ; he does not make
the joy of a Prince like that of a
Valet, nor the fierceness of a common
Souldier

who

Souldier equal to that of his General. There are also in the motions of the Soul different degrees, which the Orator ought to distinguish, to avoid the confusion of Images; Which are not well comprehended or understood but by those who are perfect Masters of the Art. The Ignorance of this Principle, so little practised, occasions the making so many false pictures of Eloquence. It is important in the multitude of Idea's which present themselves to the Fancy, to make a just choice, and to avoid taking the false for the true; this demands an exact discernment, a great experience, and an exquisite understanding; we ought above all, to make a reflection, that in the extremity ^{of the} ~~and~~ heat of our Fancy may not transport us, and *the too much* shocks more than the *too little*. This is that which the *Roman* Orator reproves so many times in his books

of

In omnibus rebus videndum quatenus; etsi enim sunt cuique modus est, tamen major offendit nimium quam parum.
De clar.
Or or.

of Rhetorick : For the too much is alwayes a mark that we are transported beyond our selves, which is a great fault ; but the too little may seem a mark of Moderation and Reserve, which is alwayes a Virtue.

§. 8.

We think it not enough to bestow our Cares in the study of our natural disposition, to follow its inclination, without committing some constraint in affecting Manners, which becomes us not, and in forcing through violent studies, wherewith we become overburdened ; or in fine, in imposing an air of Greatness, or of more Art than we are able to sustain ; this began (as *Cicero* notes) first to make Eloquence degenerate from that Grandeur which it had in *Athens*, under *Pericles*, *Lysias*, *Eschines*,

Phalerus
non tam
armis,
quam

Palæstra institutus, Cicero in Brut.

res, and Demosthenes; for that Demetrius Phalerius affected more of Art than his Genius could bear.

§. 9.

The Pronunciation, which is one of the most important parts of Eloquence, is yet one of the most neglected: It renders Eloquence sensible to the people by the composition of the exteriour part, and which hath the Art to impose by the appearances, when it wants the power to touch by its effects. If its virtue be so great, as to make impression in Subjects feigned and supposed, as it doth upon a Theater in a Comedy, what can she not do, when things true are her object? But this admirable Art becomes unprofitable to those which speak in publick, because of the little

little care they have to use and apply it; 'tis true, he must have much of the natural in him, who succeeds well in this Art; but where he wants that, application may supply. The Eloquence of *Demosthenes* became admirable by his pronunciation, though he had not any natural disposition; and he was obliged for his success, to the pains that he took to obtain it: But because we are soon weary of these constraints, we cannot resolve to give our selves the pain that is required to form our selves to this exercise whereby we lose that great advantage that the pronunciation gives to an Orator, by giving a certain agreement to his person, and by the passionate expressions which it inspires even into his Eyes and Visage: Also we may truly say, that nothing frustrates more the ordinary effects of Eloquence than the little care we have of the exterior

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part;

part, whose faults become so much more sensible, as they are above, in delicacy, the other pleasures we receive from Eloquence; which being an Art to please by the profession which it makes, hath nothing more opposed to it, than that which is violent and disagreeable in the action.

§. 10.

Those which make profession to speak in publick, are not so careful to put in use their Logick, either by a pure negligence to instruct themselves in it, or by a natural debility to practise it; or in fine, by a very blameable regret they have to put themselves in pain of a little Meditation, in which the Discourses of Ceremony, or of Interests of State, with those of Religion, have not any part; and those which are purely for pomp and preparation,
are

are ordinarily those wherein Logick finds its self most defective; for that they are too wandring, or too abstract for the general matters whereof they treat. Logick is the first Rule of Discourse, and the universal Organ of Speech; to discourse without this Instrument, 'tis but to beat the Air, and make a noise; we cannot say any thing that's judicious, or supportable, without it. How oft do we abandon it? and when we put it into use, how many extravagances do we commit, either by the confusion of the expressions wherewith we perplex it; or in fine, by the *Idea* we form of false Reasonings, to supply the want of the true Reason, which cannot inhabit but in a Spirit fine and penetrating: The rareness of such a Character is the reason that we find Eloquence so defective in the most part of those which make profession of it: for that the Reasonings

sonings on which they establish it, are either too mysterious, or too common, or altogether false and Chimærical; and if we examine things well, we shall find that commonly in the usage of Eloquence in this age, there is no defect so essential as that of Reasoning, to which we have no great care to form our selves. This is not so much obtained by the study of Logick, which we learn at the Colledge; as by the reading *Aristotles* Rhetorick, and by the frequent commerce we must have with good Books, the reading whereof imprints upon the spirit a justness of apprehension, which cannot be acquired without it. A right judgment is sometimes a Gift which comes purely from Nature; but when we have it not, we must labour to find it in Books, whereof we must be careful to make a good choice; for we may meet with
some

some Books, which, instead of rectifying, may quite destroy our judgments: We must therefore take counsel of the most knowing persons, upon what we are not able to understand our selves. The neglect of this, is the reason why so few persons are capable, and young men yet more than others; for that their experience and the usage of things have not yet form'd their Spirit: But though the want of Logick be the most ordinary defect of those that speak in publick, yet it is a thing whereof there alwayes appears the least want; for none but men of the finest spirits, whereof there is alwayes the fewest, are capable of that knowledge; not but that the people perceive very well the natural order of Discourse, and all that there is of Logick in it, without knowing it; but their Light reaches not so far to see what is

false in his Reasonings, or defectuous in the order and pursuit of his Design: Upon which we may make three Orders of Spirits, the first, of those which attend only to the Words, to judge of their Beauty; the second, of those which go further, and who judge of the Thoughts: the third, of those which go even to judge even of the whole Design, Order and Proportion of the Parts; which last is not known but by the most intelligent. There are some Orators who leave not their Auditors liberty to examine the bottom of their Discourse, by a certain Charm of Words and of Thoughts, wherewith they surprize them: There are some others which quite blind us by the agreeable manner of expressing things. I have known a person of this sort, who alwayes pleas'd, though his Discourse was very little

tle correct, either in the Order or Reasoning: but after all, he pleas'd none but Women and the Ignorant; the more understanding esteem'd him not.

§. II.

When we apply our selves to the study of Eloquence, we are accustomed to mistake, by the false measures we take of it, or of its Subject, or of those to whom we address our selves. For an Orator who hath a great elevation of Spirit, many times takes too great a pleasure in pursuing his own Fancy, without giving any care to proportion his Discourse to the Subject, or to measure the capacity of those to whom he speaks; it is much more easie to abandon our selves to the impetuosity of our Genius, than to regulate our selves according to the Circumstances of

the things we speak of ; for one is the effect of Imagination, the other the effect of Judgment, which is a Gift more rare. Also it is no marvel if those that speak in publick, are so subject to this Disorder, out of which spring so many Indecencies, and choquant Disproportions which are jumbled together in our ordinary discourses which are made publick ; as the assuming of an air of greatness in the most trivial affairs, and affecting grand expressions in the most petty Subjects ; making ostentation of the beauty of ~~his~~ Spirit to the people, and before a gross and stupid Auditory, and being ardent and pathetick in Subjects which deserve it not. Eloquence ceases to be true, when it hath no proportion with the capacity of those to whom it is ad-

our

Refert
cognosce-
re qui sunt
audienti
ura mores,

que publica recepta persuasio. *Fab. l. 3. c. 7.*

dressed

4 dressed. The diversity of Ages, Sexes and Conditions, and of Lights acquired or natural; ought to oblige the Orator in different manners to proportion it to the Spirits of these different estates.

Ut gubernator ad incursum tempestatum, sic agenti ad varietatem causarum ratio

mutanda. *Quintil. l. 10, cap. 7.*

§. 12.

It must be known in general to distinguish the divers Characters of Eloquence, for to serve himself according to the necessity of the Subject whereof we treat, lest we fall into confusion. And we must be especially careful of this confusion, because nothing is capable to succeed in this Art out of its place. The grand Air of Eloquence ought to be in great places, and in great Assemblies, where we find a general concourse: For we must speak to persons of great quality in that kind of Discourse which hath most

Tenues
causæ
tenue di-
cendiculum
requirunt.

Orat.

Oratio
poscitur
austera,
si accuses;
fusa, si
laudes.

Quintil.

l. 9. c. 4.

Loquendi

accurata,

& sine moleſtia diligens Elegantiæ. Cic. in Brut.

most of esteem, extention and grandeur of expression. This Character ought to be used in the most elevated Subjects, and in the most important matters; as it ought to be simple, natural, and without affectation of expression in lesser Subjects. Praises demand a Stile elevated and diffused; Accusations serious and austere; in fine, Eloquence hath arrived to its utmost perfection, when it knows to adapt words proportionate to things, and to conserve the care to unfold her self without difficulty or scruple.

There remains two things especially to be avoided, the cold Stile, and the Boyish; for the first renders the Discourse dry and insipid, by the faint languor and lowness of its expression; the second renders it distastful and tedious by its affected

affected amplifications, wherewith they weary the patience of the Auditor.

§. 13.

Though that *Longin.* confounds in some fashion the cold Stile, and Boyish, whereof I have spoken we may alwayes distinguish them in this manner; in the affectation of a cold Stile, we use great expressions in Subjects which demand little; and in the Boyish, we use little and low expressions in things that demand great: But our Language is become so modest, reserved and scrupulous, that it rejects all expressions too strong and glittering, Metaphors too hardy, and the too frequent points in a cold stile, as it does in the Boyish, the little exultations in serious matters, and the too languishing amplifications in those places of discourse, which

which ought to be serious and concise.

§. 14.

It is impossible to be happy in an elevated Stile, when we are not entirely perswaded that it is formed of the things themselves which we have to speak, of the great images which we have conceived, and of the elevation of our Genius more than that of Expression, the vain splendor of words, or that train of studied Periphrases. This is that which in Discourse, in some manner, is like that load of Flesh in the Body of man, which serves only to charge & imbarass it with an unprofitable weight; for when this elevated Stile is unnatural, it degenerates into a Character low and reptile; for it cannot sustain it self. *Pindar* and *Sophocles* elevated themselves so high by
the

the grandeur of their expression, that they could not, without much pain, pursue it. And when they could not bear up that elevation, which is not natural; for that it is not alwayes in the things they speak of; they sometimes abase themselves even to a contempt, and become not knowabl even to themselves. This is a fault not to be pardoned; for there is a presumption of appearing great without being so, and a desire to elevate themselves without being able to sustain themselves in that height.

The Secret is to study how to think of things worthily, and serve our selves of no other words than of those which are capable to answer to the dignity of the Subject whereof we speak.

Oratio
sententiis
debet esse
ornatio:
quam ver-
b. s. Fab.

§. 15.

As the great defect of the wiser sort of men is the negligence they have to measure themselves upon the capacity of the Subject, or their Auditory. That of the lesser Genius's is a too scrupulous care, and a too affected Diligence to attach themselves more than is required, to finish in particular certain parts of the Discourse they have enterprized, & to which they have some peculiar affection. This is a pure effect of their little judgment, to tie themselves to one part of a Design; for they are not able, nor so happy as to form a Design all entire. These narrow Spirits suffer themselves to be surpriz'd into a false Principle, which they would authorize by the Authority of *Tyrinus Maximus*, who pretends that Art hath alwayes something

something more perfect than Nature ; and that we cannot find any natural Beauty that can be so perfect as some of their artificial Statues. I pretend not to enter into a Discussion of that Principle with this Philosopher : But Eloquence being the true Art to please, which she cannot do without an imitation of Nature, that Maxime of those little Spirits which give so much to Art, is not a very sure mean to perswade. I pretend not only that Rule is false, but that their too Boyish Attachment to Precepts which they have learned in their youth, hath form'd in them a very vicious Idæa of Eloquence : We need not then consult the *Agamemnon* of *Petronus*, to comprehend the ridiculousness of that Eloquence which hath nothing of natural in it ; for that it fastens it self too much upon the exterior Ornaments, which they would

would have to pass for that which is most essential. The true foundation of Eloquence is a good Judgment, which as it is the quality most necessary to speak in publick, so it is the most rare; we need not be astonished that we find so few perfect Orators, since a perfect Orator cannot be form'd but in an Age happy, and in a people of good Gust.

§. 16.

The Sovereign Art of Eloquence consisteth in a scrupulous attention to Nature, as to its true Model, and first Original, whereof we have so little knowledge, by reason of the little care we take to pursue the Tracts, and to observe the conduct; we must study then to know well this great Model, and to examine all its Resorts by a profound study

dy of Philosophy, and a long observation of natural things ; for so often as we depart from Nature we fall into error and mistake ; the heat of our most passionate motions, is but a false heat ; the most dazzling splendour of her Figures are but a false and deceitful blaze ; and the greatest of her Reasons hath nothing real, and is no other than a sophistical Declamation and pure Illusion.

§. 17.

We find very little of construction in the Discourses of the most of our publick Orators, because they apply not themselves to study the Rules of Speech. Those which have a genius for Eloquence find it a trouble to abase themselves to those little scrupulous cares which are necessary to succeed well ; the natural elevation of
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their spirit cannot be subjected to those circumspections ; and those that have not that genius, are subject to fall into the fault of affectation, to supply by words that which they want of light to understand things well.

ø. 18.

The most ordinary source of those defects which we meet with in the expression, which is so essential to Eloquence, comes from the natural defects of the imagination. The expression falls into a Lux and into superfluity, when the Imagination is too quick and ardent ; she falls into galimatias and into obscurity, when the Imagination is too abundant and too profuse : In fine, it falls into a faint languishing and insipidness, when the Imagination is too cold, too heavy and enveloped.

ø. 19.

§. 19.

We scarce ever study that just temperament which is of so much use in the mixing in our Discourse, Reason with Authority, Comparison and Similitude with Example and Induction. In the usage it self which we make of this great Instrument of perswasion, we apply not our selves with any care to arrange our reasons in such a manner, as that the one may sustain the other by the order which we give them; for the stronger Reasons ought to succeed the weak, and the most solid to those that are the less solid, to the end that the Discourse may sustain and elevate it self the nearer it approaches to the period of its perfection. This is a thing of such Importance, that the only neglect of this observation renders sometimes the reasonings which are very

strong and solid, little effective, for that they weaken themselves when the proportion of the reasons is not observed. This proportion consists in the not urging of any thing that may appear weak, when we have said any thing more perswasive: For the latter Reasons make the most lasting impression in the spirit, and ought therefore, as I have said before, to be the most strong. Besides the manangement of the Reasons, which ought to be placed in their natural order, and ought not to be confounded, they must also be orderly mananged in the use which we make of Induction, least we be exposed to an inconsiderate multiplication. Also our Orator must have that admirable Art, which knows generously to retrench superfluities in things as well as words, and to suppress too frequent Ornaments, without hearkning to the transport of the
Imagi-

Imagination, which by a natural inclination suffers it self to be carryed away to a vain splendour of Discourse, which usually hath nothing of solid Eloquence, he cannot move with success those great Machines of het Art, without these precautions, which are of the highest consequence, for that they reduce things to their natural estate. But these Observations are but seldom practic'd, because they are but little known.

ø. 20.

That Eloquence which touches not the spirit, and makes not its way to the heart, is not true Eloquence, it is no more than a pure instruction, which ought not to be used but in the School. And all those Beauties which smite the spirit without affecting the heart, are not true Beauties. That great Air

it self which *Longinus* teaches, affects but little, when it doth not dazle nor astonish, as he avows himself, for that it enters not into the thoughts of those to whom we speak. All those great expressions, without as great thoughts, are like those great Ships that are not balanced, they float, and never sail in safety.

§. 21.

That Eloquence in general which bestowes too much care in the arrangment of words, and of that outward splendour which glitters in the expression, almost never succeeds. We are usually displeas'd with all things which appear studied and artificial. That great Orator *Isocrates*, which wrote, as it

Cum verborum decorat affectibus fidentem, et ubique solentatur veritas abesse videtur. *Quint. l. 10. c. 4.*
Non ad judiciorum certamen, sed ad voluptatem aurium scripserat *Isocrates*. Cic Orat.

seems

seems, only for pleasure, was not fit for affairs, and had never succeeded at the Barr, for that he was too polish'd. This was the manner also of the Sophists, upon whom *Socrates* rallyes so pleasantly in *Plato's Phædra*, and *Longinus* notes in the great artifice of *Hiperides*, who used to fill his Discourse with too many Ornaments, and too many beauties. It is a great Art to know how to mannage these Ornaments, and to dispose them in their due place, when necessity obliges to make use of them. The Artifice of Eloquence cannot have any effect, but against it self, when it is too dazling, for thereby it becomes suspected, and we regard it only as a Page which is gawdily drest, for no other end than to surprize. Besides, that which strikes the spirit and the sense with too much splendor, wearies and oppresses. In fine, 'tis necessary that the mat-

Quæ pa-
rent retia
vitat avis:
Ovid.

ters themselves be not without beauty to bear those great Ornaments which become ridiculous in little Subjects; for there is nothing more contrary to Art, than to adorn what merits it not: And 'tis not of the least importance in this Art, to know what is to be neglected, and what is not. To be too expensive in Ornaments, is but a vain and fruitless prodigality; for we often find, that which glitters most in Discourse is most usually false. Those studied Figures, those fine Antithesies, and those splendid Epithites, are not always conformable to good sense. True Eloquence doth not dazle or surprize, but insinuates by little and little into the spirit. The Reasons that are most capable to move, are ordinarily the most common, as *Aristotle* teacheth us. And the most natural Language to which we are carried, by the sole desire we have to make
our

Topic. I.

upon Eloquence.

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our selves understood, is most proper and the best. Those Discourses which require much of spirit and ornament, as Panegyricks, and Funeral Orations, contain little that's very solid, and generally owe their success to the pronunciation : We may discover the truth when they come to the Press ; which I advise those that make them, not to publish. When they want that heat of action which first gave them life, they make no longer any impression. There are Images in Eloquence as there is in painting, which somtime must be shown to the view at a distance, and somtime near at hand.

§. 22.

There is required in Eloquence less of Genius to invent things, than to place them in order : For that place which we must assign (to have them dispos'd where they ought

ought to be) will cost more than the pains we are at in cogitation and invention ; for every reasonable spirit may have reasonable thoughts ; but it is not so easie to give to our thoughts that grace which renders things agreeable, and which makes them to be admir'd. This is it in which consists Eloquence : I mean not that Eloquence of words which we ordinarily know but too much, but the Eloquence of things, which we seldom well understand, and have little knowledg of ; and the perfect attainment of which, we cannot hope than from an happy Nature. We may know the price of this Art, by the great difference in the same things diversified. This right disposal of things ordinarily makes the beauty of an Oration ; and though this Air be usually the bounty of our Nature , yet we have means to acquire it, when Nature

ture hath denyed it ; as a frequent use of Composition under a good Master, or an intelligent friend, and a diligent commerce with ancient Authors ; it is from them that we learn that justness which gives to the Spirit that agreeable variety, and which the spirit communicates to all its thoughts and Imaginations when we have a Genius for it.

§. 23.

There is not, according to the sentiment of *Cicero*, any true Eloquence, but that which doth attract an admiration ; and there is nothing more capable to render it admirable, according to the judgment of that great man, than the pictures that it makes of manners, and those motions that it excites in those divers passions which it toucheth. This cannot be effected without a perfect knowledg

Elloquentiam quæ admirationem non habet nisi iudicio.
Cic in Brut.

of

of the heart of man, which ought to be the sovereign Science of the O-
rator. The Portraits that he
makes of manners cannot be false,
if he know well the principal,
which is the heart; and he will know
without doubt, how to move with
success the most hidden Parts of the
soul, that is to say, the Passions, by
the same knowledg of the heart,
which is the source. The little cares
(that the most part of those that
speak in publick have to know the
depth of that abyss which appears
so difficult to descend) is the cause
that we have so few successful Ora-
tors. For this cause those who
make profession of Eloquence,
ought to make very serious Refle-
ctions; for all being well considered,
no man is properly eloquent, who
knows not the heart of man, and all
its intricate Mæanders, to expose
them to the people.

§. 24.

The evil Education of Youth, caused by the extream luxury and delicateness of this Age, by the indulgence of Parents, by the little experience of Masters, and by the ignorance of the most part of those with whom we converse, is one of the most certain Causes that there is so little success in this Art, it being one of the greatest obstacles to Eloquence. We conduct our Youth through false and unequal paths, and through very unskilful methods, who being corrupted even in their principals, it is no wonder if their success be so little happy, and their pursuits unprofitable.

Quis ignorat eloquentiam descivisse a veteri gloria, non inopia hominum, sed desidia juventutis parentum negligentia, et inscientia precipitentium.

§. 25.

I do not affirm that there are not yet some sparks of wit remaining, which

which eminently shine in some of the Orators of this Age, who cease not to merit applause and reputation: but because Eloquence purely natural cannot atchieve any thing without the succour of Art, as may be usually observed either by the false principles which we assume, or the little application of those who make profession of it: it cannot arrive to merit the general admiration of the people, by the marvellous effects which it would produce upon their hearts if it were accomplished.

I have thus finished the Reflections, as may be made upon the use of the Eloquence of this Time, considered in general; and upon that which may hinder its effects in those occasions which it hath to make appear its power over hearts. Those that follow are Reflections upon the use of Eloquence in
parti-

particular, and the two principal Species of it, The Eloquence of the *Barr*, and that of the *Pulpit* ; wherein I have remarked the abuse which may be committed in the one and in the other, and the means to succeed with moderate felicity in both.

REFLECTIONS
UPON THE
Eloquence
OF THE
B A R R.



Loquence in General may be reduced to two Species : Whereof one is occupied in Interests of State ; The other in those of Religion : also one is prophane, the other Sacred. The first hath a vaster Carriere than we are able to think ; she is not busied only to sustain an Ordinance, nor to defend a Law ; she exerciseth her self in the Campaign, as well as in the Cabi-

Cabinet ; she presides over States, and is imploy'd in Councils of War; she rules in the Camp, and hath the greatest part in the Government and Ministry of Kingdomes. But because she is at all times more particular in Cabinets, where we cannot penetrate to come to the knowledg of her, where she passeth for a Mystery, and is no where so publick as at the Barr, I'll confine my self to the state which she holds there, being the place where she appears with most advantage.

§. I.

At the Barr we give no time to the study of Eloquence, but what we gave in the first studies of our Youth, which are ordinarily too precipitate, too confused, or too superficial. This renders us unable to form any just or reasonable Idea of it. Besides the great advantages
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that the *Greeks* and *Romans* had by the force of their Genius, and by their great natural dispositions they had to speak, they made Eloquence their continual study during their lives they travel'd all the World to understand the most choyce Masters of this Art, they laid out a long time and study to form their spirits upon the great models which they went to seek out of other Countries; they did not occupy themselves as if they were to gain nothing by it ; they placed their pleasure, their hopes, their fortune, and all their ambition in the study of it, for it was then able to elevate them to the greatest Honours. But the young men of these Times (with a very indifferent genius's) believe that the reading of a Romance or a Comedy, is sufficient to acquire all the Eloquence which is necessary to the Bar. We are not excited by the same hopes of Glory as the
Greeks

upon Eloquence.

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Greeks and *Romans* were, amongst whom Eloquence attained so much splendour, because it was the way that conducted to the highest Honours, even to the Sovereign power it self.

§. 2.

When all the Qualities requisite to succeed in the Eloquence of the Barr concur in an Orator, with all the perseverance of Application, and is encouraged in it by a prospect of Interest and Ambition; yet those little condescensions to which he must submit in a scrupulous and exact usage of the practick, would be able to weary the spirit, and to take away the power to form an Idea according to Art and Nature; he must have a care to shun this default, and to prevent it by an anticipated study of Eloquence, where we must form the

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spirit,

spirit, before we abandon the Imagination to the barbarous terms of the practick.

§. 3.

The Eloquence of the Barr is too much subjected to the divers Fantasies of Language, which reign in this Age, according to the different gusts which prevail, and corrupt it by taking away the natural beauties, & in giving it false and adulterate. There was a tedious kind of Eloquence which had once the vogue amongst the *Romans*, which consisted in a long and perplexing Discourse : But this gust changing with the Age, one more judicious succeeded. Nevertheless it is true that the Eloquence of the Barr demands a Manner diffused and extended : But that Embarras of words to which these kind of Declamators usually abandon them-

Subsilia
grandior
remet ple-
niorem
vocem de-
siderant.
Cic. in Brut.

themselves, alwayes displeaseth :
We are not now taken with things
so little real and solid.

§. 4.

Too great a care to appear regular, exact and just in our Discourse, is sometime very dangerous ; it wearies both the attention of those that speak, and those that hear. We ought to shun this fault, and must not alwayes be so scrupulous to speak nothing but what is exact ; it suffices to have a care to maintain a certain equality and evenness ; for there is nothing more essential to him that speaks, than to speak according to his Genius, without force or constraint. Besides, those scrupulous Orators that speak with so much circumspection, have nothing of great or elevated ; the care they take to speak things so correctly renders flat

their spirit ; and they have not the power to move the heart by the greatness of their thoughts ; they expose our Language by this constraint, and too much scruple, to loose its force and abundance, being too desirous to preserve its sweetness and delicateness.

§. 5.

There is also another extremity to be avoided, which is a too great negligence, not only in the ornament of the words, but also in the right order and disposal of things. Those which have already established their Reputation, and which are accusom'd to a long usage of the air of the Barr, are most subject to fall into this Errour ; for when they arrive to above forty years of age, and to great employment, they think then of nothing but of what is profitable and solid ;
they

they abandon the ornaments of Eloquence, for they have no time to spend in the thoughts of it : And the care of Interest surmounts that of Glory and Ambition.

ø. 6.

There are some occasions notwithstanding where this negligence is pardonable, and where the heat of a Discourse, and the impetuosity of the Genius succeeds sometimes better than all our care, the most exact words, or all the Ornaments of Art. The difficulty is to know and distinguish it ; when we have sufficient force of spirit and understanding to know it, we need not be much troubled to surmount the scruples which may arise from the negligence of certain places in our Discourse, which regularly ought not to have been neglected.

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§. 7.

There are also certain manners peculiar to the Barr, which are known but to few Orators, for that they are not discovered but by a great penetration of spirit, a serious inquiry into the sources, and in studying with much meditation the great models of Eloquence which we have amongst the Ancients. These are the extraordinary efforts of this Art, which surprizeth the Judges, and which works unforeseen and unexpected effects in their spirits: Such was that which *Cicero* praises in one *Canus Ruffinus*, who being accused with much vehemence by *Sisenna*, cryed out with a very touching and animated voyce to the Judges, *O ye Judges, I am circumvented, except ye succour me, &c.* That shew of fear that he had to be surprized, and the protection he so

passio-

passionately demanded of his Judges, touched them so much, that they became favourable to him. There are an infinite of like places in *Demosthenes* and *Cicero*; but we must make reflection that these are not the glistering parts of an Oration, or that splendour of words that works these effects. These Charms of Eloquence are more in the things themselves, than in the words; whose beauty we cannot unfold, nor give certain Rules to it, for that they are inexplicable: yet we cannot fail, (if we have a right judgment,) of a true discovery. Sometime in these great Subjects of Eloquence, we must imitate that Master-piece of the Painter, who to express the grief of *Agamemnon* at the sacrifice of his Daughter, drew him with his face covered, despairing that his Art could express the sorrows of a Father, after he had express that of his

Cic. in Brut

his friends in a manner so vigorous. These also are the expressions that *Cicero* requires in matters of importance, *Significatio saepe major erit quam oratio*. These places ought to be prepared by a passionate and tender Discourse, and by all the most studied attractions of that Art, to have that success that they ought to have.

§. 8.

Melior
moderatio
et nonnun-
quam etiam
patientia
bonus al-
tercator
vitio ira-
cundiae
careat.
Quint. l. 6.
c. 4.

Nothing hath so much power on the spirit of his Judges, as the opinion of a general probity, and especially a moderation in the affairs which wound his own Interest, or that of his Party. An affair becomes suspected, when it is mannaged with transportation ; and Choller may ruine the most just Cause ; for we are apt to believe that Cause to be unjust, which useth only passion for its defence. Moderation, above
all

all other vertues, knows the best how to regulate the outward motions, and wherewith we are the most sensibly touched : And indeed they must have a very ill opinion of their Judg, who think him capable to take pleasure in their Choller, and in their ill humour.

§. 9.

Nothing so ill consists with the Eloquence of the Barr, as that fruitless cumber of Common Places, wherewith our Pleaders swell their Discourse beyond proportion, and serves only to weary the patience of the Judg, and make him distast that which may be good in the rest. They are ordinarily the young men that are most subject to this default; they wander about, because they want force of spirit to enter immediately into the matter : We should render them a great service, if we could

Loci inanes, nec erudita civitate tolerabiles, Cic.

could make them resolve to leave that length and circuit of Discourse which is so much contrary to decorum, and becomes odious and insupportable. A Discourse spun out with these childish amplifications, becomes languishing, it only makes the Judges yawn, and lulls them into a slumber.

§. 10.

It is also the delight of young men to glister in all they say : But true Eloquence seeks not after that vain splendour, which is only proper to dazle the spirit. We alwayes fall into errour when we study too much to please. That Lawyer which relies more upon a passage of *Seneca* for defence of his Cause, than upon good Reason, very much deceives himself ; those glistering passages have not any force to perswade, they serve only to waken the spirit
of

of the Judge, when it is weary.

§. II.

We feldome take any care of the exterior part which relates to action, which *Cicero* calls the Eloquence of the Body, whose perfection consists in the gesture and pronounciation, because we do not enough comprehend the necessity and importance thereof: *Quintilian* only hath given us any precepts of it, which *Aristotle* and *Cicero* have omitted, possibly believing that it was a gift only of Nature, which could not be reduced into Art or Method, and have contented themselves only to note to us the importance of it, which they have done in several places of their works. This right pronounciation is so important, that we cannot neglect it without renouncing what is most powerful and perswasive in Elo-

Eloquence: It is that which rules most in Discourse, and which irresistibly invades the soul, and in which consists the greatest force and ornament. The great Talent of *Hortensius* who equall'd *Cicero* in Reputation, was the skilful management of the action: He was so admirable in an ardent manner of speaking, that *Roscins* and *Æsop*, the most famous Comedians of that time, went alwayes to hear his O-rations, to learn from him their measure. Having so little care to form our selves to this action, we need not be astonish'd that we see so few tracts of that Eloquence which wrought so many wonders in the Times of *Cicero* and *Demosthenes*, who alwayes endeavour'd to express in themselves, by their ardour and vehemence, those passions which they intended to excite in the Spirits of their Auditors. It is true we have seen Orators
some

some years past, who gave weight to all their Reasons by the force wherewith they animated their Discourse : but after all, their ardency was so ill mannaged, that what they said, lost its grace, by the desire they had to be too passionate : for when once the fire mounted to their faces, we could understand no more, their pronunciation became so confus'd by their excessive transport. Some others appear too cold, they shew in their greatest affairs little of that emotion which is necessary to enflame the spirit of the Judges, which are not at all touched in these great Subjects, but by great movements. We may say to these languishing Declamators that of *Cicero* against *Calidius*, who spoke things very touching with an air of tranquility, *An ista si vera essent, sic a te dicerentur?* All those which speak at the Barr are subject to add to the evil

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pronunciation, which they learn'd at the Colledg ; One constant and disagreeable tone, and an impression of the accent in the *penultima* syllables, which occasions rather laughter than perswasion.

§. 12.

The Subjects which furnish the present condition of the *Bar*, having nothing of great or elevated, cannot give to Eloquence those advantages, which is found in the more important matters of the *Antients*: Such were the deliberations of War and Peace, the considerations of the good of the State and the publick interest, the accusations and defenses of *Princes* and *Kings*, which the great Orators discoursed with so much splendour. The interests which are at this time the Subjects of the *Barr*, are sometimes so little considerable that they

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they are not capable to furnish matters of such worth to Eloquence, as made it in those times to triumph over hearts. This was one of the advantages (that *Messalla* notes in the Dialogue of *Quintilian*) the ancient Orators had above those of his time: in effect, petty Subjects make petty Orators; and the Spirit of him that speaks in publick, is elevated by the merit and elevation of the Subject.

His accedebat splendor rerum, & magnitudo causarum; quibus ipsa plurimum eloquentia præstat.
Dialog. de cons. or. eloq.
 Crescit

cum amplitudine rerum vis ingenij: nec quisquam illustrem orationem facere potest, nisi qui causam paranti invenit. *Id.*

§. 13.

There is an Eloquence of pure Authority which is of very great use at the *Bar*; and though it be not passionate, and its manner of declaiming be cold, and serious, yet it has the dignity that is required to imprint respect and veneration; we hearken to it as to an Oracle, being pre-
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ingaged

ingaged in its favour. This is the Eloquence of the Judges, and those which make Orations to Princes and great Lords, who ought to observe this calm and peaceful Eloquence, who must speak without emotion to preserve their Character, for it ought to have nothing in it but submissive and respectful, and ought to be regulated according to the rank and quality of those to whom it is addressed, either more or less respectfully, according to their degree or merit.

REFLEC-

REFLECTIONS UPON THE Eloquence OF THE PULPIT

Is a thing above wonder,
that in so great a number
of Persons who apply
themselves to Preaching,
we find so few who succeed, see-
ing they have so many advantages
infinitely above all others who
speak in publick. The Eloquence
of the Barr cannot furnish its Ora-
tors with matters so important to
treat, with things so touching to
F 2 speak,

Speak, nor with such great motives to persuade, as this Eloquence of the Pulpit: all those Engines which she employs in moving the Passions are so powerful, the Figures of Rhetorick (which are as sanctified in the Mouth, by the commerce it has with the holy Spirit) so glorious, and the mysteries that it unfolds, are so transcendent, and it speaks by the dignity of its Character with so much authority; that if there be any Eloquence which is perfect Mistress of hearts, by the power that it hath to move, and by its natural independance, it must be this; from whence comes it then that we have so few good Preachers? It is not the fault of the Auditors, since Faith prepares their Spirits to a perfect submission to what they come to hear: the sight of Altars inspires them with respect, and they are already persuaded by the principles of their Religion,
of

of what they come to attend. Finally, since the Preacher speaks as the Ambassadour of God, and his words are the words of his eternal Master, when he preaches everlasting recompence to those that be-
lieve, and threatens unspeakable punishments to those who disbe-
lieve; it must be his own fault if he have not all the success that his function merits. But as it is too true that amongst all Professions, there are the fewest in this who succeed well in this Art, it will not be unprofitable to search out the way to remedy it, since it is a thing of so great importance, which I pretend to do by these following Reflections.

§. I.

We seldome enter into serious consideration of that disposition of mind, which the holiness of that

ministry of the word of God, and the dignity of a Function so sacred, requires. There is not only expedient a great Application, and long study to replenish the mind with great Images, which are necessary to form the Character of this Eloquence; but there must be also long retirements from the noise of the World, to prepare the heart by solitude for the reception of the holy Spirit, whose Interpreter the Preacher takes upon himself to be: It is from this eternal Spirit that he takes his immediate mission by the principles of the interior life, to dispose him to take his *Orders* from those who are established in dignity, and have received the power of God to communicate it to others: He must then take great care that he be not too much abandoned to himself and to his Genius; but first he must passionately seek the succours of Heaven, by the frequent use

Quomo-
do prædi-
cabunt nisi
mittantur.
5. Rom. 12.

use of Meditation and Prayer. Without this divine assistance it is impossible to penetrate into the mysteries and hidden truths of the Gospel. How many does this? who ever thinks of it? what studies or what retreats do we make to dispose our hearts? or what preparations of Spirit do we bring to this holy Function? do not we see every day young Preachers without Virtue or Science ascend the Pulpit, with the same end that a *Comedian* mounts the Theater? they invite their Friends by Letters, and fill a great Circle with their Relations, who engage a great assembly of their honest acquaintance, to grace the audience and to encourage those young Declamators; they raise their Eyes to Heaven with a feigned complaisance and counterfeit admiration, when they have pronounced two or three ill arrang'd periods without stumbling;

and when they have a little confidently said what possibly themselves have not the courage to act; when these trifling Orators have done what they can, they are but pittied by those who judge without preoccupation, even in those performances wherein they think they have reason to triumph. They have a very false *Idea* of so holy a Function, if they think to advance its reverence by such preachings, a Preacher must have other qualities to enable him to represent with success the Sword of Gods word like a flame to the Eyes of the Offenders, to reduce *Libertines* under the sacred Yoke of the Gospel, and to cast into our Spirits the terrour of the last Judgement, by a vigorous representation of the pains of Hell, and the dreadful consequence of our unbeleif, and to sustain in some sort the Dignity, Grandeur and Majesty of the Subjects,

jects, whereof our Religion makes profession. It is also without doubt for this reason, that the two Apostles of our Lord were called the Children of Thunder; for the word of God which they proclaimed, with that dignity which it merited, was bright and terrible in their Mouths. Few of our Declamators are thus qualified, they usually Preach for their recreation, or to perform the Injunctions of their Physicians, to discharge themselves of some troublesome Fat: these are profanations so deplorable that we should with great difficulty beleive it, had we not so many examples of it in this Age.

§. 2.

We do not enough consider that it is on Gods account we speak when we Preach, by which means we deprive the Word of its weight
and

and authority ; for the greatest part of Preachers speak only of their Patrons, to whom they make a merchandise of themselves, and extinguish in some manner the Spirit of God, to give place entirely to their own exorbitant and extravagant Fancies. This was not the practice of the antient Prophets, who were the Preachers of the old Law, they spoke not as private men to the People, but as men sent from God ; and the grandeur of that Master whose commands they delivered, attracted the respect of their Auditors. I have sometimes seen an Ambassador of a petty stranger Prince, who had no Talent in speaking, but because he was to speak on the account of his Master, he assumed on himself an air of authority by which he procured attention, and perswaded meerly by the address he had to make himself considered : What weight then should

Pro Chri-
sto legati-
one fungi-
mur tan-
quam deo
exhor-
tante per
nos, 2 Cor.
5.

Should we give to the Word of God, if we know the Art, to treat of it as the word of God, and not as a pure invention of the wit of man? he therefore that would Preach the Word with success, must do as Saint Paul did, *Per arma Justitiae in verbo veritatis in virtute Dei*, Cor. 2.

§. 3.

As this sacred Eloquence travels in a Feild infinitely more large than Eloquence profane; It proposes an eternal Kingdome for the object of our hopes; and torments which indure for ever, of our fears and caution. The sanctity of our mysteries, the purity of our morality, the Majesty of the God which we adore, of whom we find so many great *Idea's* in the holy Scripture, and all those glorious Truths which render our Religion so august, are the most ordinary Subjects wherein this divine Eloquence

quence is exercised. It demands also, to work the effects which it proposes to it self, greater natural qualities, and a genius more elevated than is required in humane Eloquence. A Preacher therefore ought to have great exterior qualities, Gravity in all his Person, Dignity in his countenance, Devotion in his Eyes, a certain ardeur in his Pronunciation, a Freedom in all his Action, and the Air of a Prophet; but a sole assembly of these exterior qualities, is so rare, that I have not known a Preacher in this Age that came near this description, except one; this one had an excellent natural disposition for Preaching joyned with the vivacity of imagination, and a fineness of Spirit, which he possessed in a soveraign degree, and which gave him a wonderful facility in expressing himself, the greatest that I have ever seen in any person; he
had

had yet a Talent in pronounciation the most extraordinary in the world, that one might say that he was an Orator in his countenance, in his voice, in his gesture, and in all his actions; he could make his Eyes with an easie motion speak any thing, give an inflection to his voice, an air to his visage, any grace to his gesture, and an agreement to to his discourse, such as he pleased; and all these in such a degree as never had Orator an equal power to him to raise attention, and as never any person was more Master of what he said, nor of the manner wherein he spoke; he could give to the Spirits of his audience what impressions he pleased. The greatest places where he Preached was too little to hold the concourse of those that followed him. Though this great facility he had in speaking betrayed him into a neglect of preparing himself, yet by
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the mere power of his action in the most indifferent and neglected discourses, he could impose upon the People by his manner of speaking : the most common things that he said, were listend to with the same applause and admiration, as those which were the most extraordinary things the choicest Preachers could say. He had certainly been the most accomplished Preacher that ever was, had his judgment and his capacity answered to his other Talents ; and if he had not been so excessive in his action, which was too significant, and besides had not all the gravity that the sanctity of the place required.

§. 4.

These natural Talents sometimes exert themselves in so much splendor, that they rob (if it be lawful so to speak) the word of God of
that

that esteem & veneration which we ought to have for it; they often procure themselves attention, not for that it is on Gods account they speak, but because they speak agreeably, because they are Eloquent, Preach novelties, or bear some Character of dignity or advancement in the Church, or for some other outward qualities, like the People of *Jerusalem*, who went to hear *Ezekiel* because he was Eloquent. For this reason it was that Saint *Austine* went first to hear Saint *Ambrose* before he was converted. The Preacher ought to shun, as a thing too humane, and too sensual, the giving place in his discourse to the curiosity of the people; which he may easily do, in taking the resolution to profit, rather than please. He cannot faile too of success, if he know how to speak of good things, and to speak them with judgement and knowledge.

Non in
sapientia
verbi, ne
vacuetur
crux
Christi.
1 Cor. 3.

§. 5.

I do not intend that it is necessary for all those that are called to the ministry to have all those great qualities that I have numbred: 'tis good that in the Church there should be men of different capacities, to be accommodated to those of their Auditors, which are so various: It suffices to a Preacher that preaches to the common People, to know the principal duties of Christianity. An indifferent Preacher is sufficiently qualified to entertain Religion, and make it subsist in a Village, maugre the ignorance and stupidity that reigns amongst us; for that mediocrity of genius, may always be in an estate to instruct, especially if it have joyned with it any Talent in speaking; and though he want the Genius to raise deep concernments, yet he may be numbred

numbred amongst those Preachers who have the power to make a great noise by an animated manner of speaking, which oftentimes works the same effect upon the hearts of the People, as the Drums and Trumpets do upon the Souldiers in a Battel: The noise astonishes them, and makes them run with precipitation upon the Enemy, without any reflection whither they go. It is not the impulse of *Reason* which moves the grosser Spirits and awakens them to their duty, for they understand it not; but it is the emotion and ardeur with which they speak, and the loudness of their Exclamations, which makes the impression; it is not the things themselves that move, but the manner of delivering them, because the manner is sensible, and the things are not: It is also manifest that the People judge not so much by the reasons (as hath been said)

as by the tone of the voice; they believe him that speaks most loud, and with most confidence; and it is to this boldness that they owe the success of their persuasions: for the truth is, the Soul is not ordinarily moved, than by what first vigorously strikes the sense. But after all this, these popular Preachers must be let to understand, that they become ridiculous when they strive to be numbred amongst the fine Spirits, and endeavour rather to please, than to edifie; it suffices in Preaching to the People, to propose simply to them the great verities of Religion, and the sanctity of its morals, without labouring so much for Forms and Ornaments, which oftentimes serve only to burthen the Preacher as well as his Audience.

p. 6.

The most part of Preachers are rendered very ignorant, by mingling themselves too much in the commerce of the world, neglecting to apply themselves (with that diligence that is required) to the work of the Ministry; 'tis this reduces them to a necessity, to copy one from another, to furnish themselves with matters for their Sermons. They take not the pains to fetch it from the Sources, nor indeed have they any knowledge of them; this is the cause that they use such ill Reasons to perswade to vertue, for they have not a capacity for good reasons, nor the Art to make them understood when they have them. They usually ruine themselves by this copying from other men, and extinguish their own Genius, by striving to assume that of others: From hence

I may say, all those deformities which are so ordinary amongst them, first receive their birth; & that which makes so many ill Preachers, is the false method they choose; they ought not to serve themselves with the designs, nor the thoughts of others, till they be able to transform them and make them proper to their own Spirits.

§. 7.

This Eloquence only becomes solid in a great capacity, nor can any hope to be fortunate in this Art, who has not before replenished his mind, with all the knowledges necessary to treat the word of God with dignity: The most important is that of Divinity, without which a Preacher cannot with that confidence and authority give clear resolutions in the subjects whereof he treats. It is a great weakness in him
that

that preaches, when he cannot determine precisely what is of Faith, and what is not, or to hesitate, when he should decide. But we know that there is nothing more great, necessary or agreeable in this Eloquence of the *Pulpit*, than Divinity, which is the Science of Religion, and there is nothing more miserable and disgusting, when it is not treated with that sufficiency and dignity with which it ought to be.

§. 8.

A too frequent commerce with the Schoolmen, brings a much greater prejudice than advantage to the Preacher, when he knows not how to make use of it as he ought, and wants Wisdom or a necessary precaution in the reading of them; for there is nothing so contrary to Eloquence, as the learning of the

Schools, and I am perswaded that the Lecture of *Thomas Aquinas*, how solid and methodick soever he be, hath made more ill Preachers than good, for he writ in a very miserable age, whose gust was universally corrupted; and that difficult manner that he hath to express things, is as much opposed to Eloquence, as the things themselves are proper; for though a simple and plain stile is fittest for instruction, yet it becomes very much contrary to what we ought to use in publick, if we take not great care. The Divines which succeeded him, have imitated the same manner, and it is now become the general method of the Schools, and so dangerous to this kind of Eloquence; it is busied only in desertations and subtilties, which may perhaps give the Nerves and force to discourse, but deprives it of the grace and beauties; hence it appears that Logick though

though it teach the Art of reasoning, yet it is not absolutely necessary to Eloquence; for though without it a discourse is but a prating in the Air, which signifies nothing: yet its succours are not to be received in that naked manner which is usual; they must be clad in the Ornaments of Eloquence, to add a grace to its discourses.

§. 9.

There may be made the same observations upon the writings of the Latin Fathers, which are also much contrary to Eloquence, by reason of the miserable estate of those times, in which they writ; every one knows to what extremities, all that which was call'd good sense, was reduc'd to at the time of the departure of the *Barbarians* from *Italy*: All the Fathers of the first age, even to Saint *Bernard*, have writ after this hard

and dry manner, excepting a very little number which are not corrupted, by this *Gusto*, by reason of some tincture, which they have conserved, as *Minutius Felix*, *Salvian*, *Arnobius*, & *St. Jerom*; to which we might add some places in the works of Saint *Ambrose* and Saint *Austin*. The Greek Fathers are more Eloquent than the Latine Fathers, though the order of their designs, and the matters which they treat on are very little just or conformable to the precepts of Art; for they have taken an Air of Eloquence, more natural and easie, but thereby they become more apt to be abandoned to their Genius, as we may observe in Saint *Basil*, and in Saint *Chrisostome*; Saint *Gregory of Nazianzen* is indeed more polished, and without doubt has more of Art; but when I advertise the Preachers of the danger of reading of the Latine Fathers (by exposing their

their Eloquence) to the end to oblige them to take caution that they ruine not themselves on that part, I pretend not to decry all commerce with them, which is not only profitable, but absolutely necessary for a Preacher to furnish his Spirit with Idea's of sanctity, and of the Grandeur of our Religion, which we find in all the works of these Authors. In the reading of these, the most pure of the Christian morality is to be found; from whence the Preacher may draw it, as from the proper source, the most clear and undisturbed, The Fathers are the Interpreters of the Evangelists, and the Church honours them with the Title of holy, because their works are as a heritage and patrimony which they have bequeathed to the faithful, as to their true Children,

§. 10.

'Tis not enough that the Preacher lay a foundation by a long study of Divinity, and a frequent reading of the Fathers, which he ought to do with method; but he must also study a Rhetorick proper to the Pulpit, whereof we find not any Character amongst the Antients, who have not had any perfect Idea of it; nor amongst the Moderns, who have only copyed from the Antients. The Majesty of our Religion, the Sanctity of its Laws, the purity of its Morality, its exalted Mysteries, and the importance of all its Subjects, ought to give it an elevation which cannot be sustain'd by the weakness of a spirit purely humane. It is in vain to search for it in the Rhetorick of *Aristotle*, in the Idea's of *Hermogenes*, or in the Institutions of *Quintilian*, even that

that sublime kind which *Longinus* hath formed of all the great expressions of the Antients which he hath collected, are feeble, and low in comparison of that which our Preacher ought to possess to maintain the dignity of his Character. That divine Air which the grandeur of Christian Religion, and the Incomprehensibility of our Faith demands, is only to be sought in those excellent Idea's which are to be found in the holy Scripture by those who know the secret to penetrate into the depth thereof. This is that pure and plentiful Spring from whence all those magnificent expressions flow, whose Author is the holy Spirit. It is from hence he ought to take those glorious Images, and that elevation which makes up the essential Character of this Eloquence: he must read with diligence the Prophets, and lay out his time in hourly meditations of them, if he would

Naturali-
ter plus
valet a.
pud pluri-
mos malo-
rum timor
quam spes
bonorum
Fab. l. 3. c. 8

would preach terror, which must be his most general practice ; for to preach well, he must terrifie the Sinner, and awaken him from the Lethargy & softness of a vitious age, by casting a terror into his Spirit. To this I add, that the Scripture is a Fountain abounding with all the Riches, and all the Ornaments, whereof this Eloquence is formed ; and that all kinds of writing are there to be found : *Esaiah* is elevated, *Jeremiah* moving, *Ezekiel* terrible, *Daniel* tender, and all the other Prophets in general contain something so great and excellent, as is not in any measure to be equall'd by what is most esteemed in prophane Orators. Good sense and right reason, was never so clearly unvail'd in any work of morality, as in the Books of *Solomon* ; never hath any History been writ with an Air more simple and elevated, mixed together, nor in a manner more perfect than that
of

of *Moses*, whereof *Longinus* only cites two words in the beginning of *Genesis*, to give the greatest and most sublime Idea that conception is capable of, so far above the highest elevation of profane Authors. Never was any thing writ more tender or delicate, for the thoughts of Devotion & Piety, than the *Psalms* of *David*: the most refined politicks and worldly wisdom, are to be found in the *Book of Wisdom* and *Proverbs*: Finally, nothing has been ever conceived in the utmost extent of humane capacity, more profound and penetrating than those sacred and adorable mysteries of Grace, and predestination, which *Saint Paul* hath delivered in his *Epistles*. And to say a word of the *New Testament*, which is the most essential Book of our Religion, to which all that hath been writ by the *Prophets* is but Preface and Introduction; what can one say more great or expressive than what our Saviour

Saviour himself said in two words,
*Joh. 6. Verba quæ locutus sum vobis Spiritus
 & vita sunt?* all the other Books
 may be said to contain only words,
 but this is a rich Treasury of
 things: And as it is the Character
 of the Spirit of man, to speak much,
 and in effect to say little; so 'tis the
 Character of the holy Spirit to
 speak little, and therein to compre-
 hend much: all the holy Scripture
 hath in it most excellent things
 couch'd in the most humble and
 simple expressions, which ordinarily
 enlarge our conceptions beyond the
 Letter. What is more plain and
 more succinct then these words,
*Joh. 1. Verbum caro factum est, --- & cruci-
 Joh. 19. fixerunt eum?* how many Commenta-
 ries hath been made upon these
 words, how many dissertations at
 this day? how great must then be the
 penetration of Spirit, which is ne-
 cessary to discover the depth of
 these Mysteries? We stay our selves
 upon

upon Eloquence.

95

upon the superficies of words without searching to the bottom, by meditation. Who is at this day a Preacher so illuminated, to penetrate into all these mysterious dark-nesses and holy obscurities of sacred Scripture, to discover the hidden Treasures thereof? alas our want comes from our little meditation thereof. It is the unhappiness of this age, that there are so few persons found capable to break the holy Bread of Gods word, which ought to be the most ordinary nourishment of the faithful; that is to say, there are few Preachers so illuminated, as to unfold the whole sense of the holy Scripture to the People; or who know how to make use of Art, which is the most certain means to succeed in their Preaching; they Preach their own Imagination and thoughts, abandoning the thoughts of the holy Spirit. Is not this to be wanting e-

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Parvuli
petierunt
panem, &
non erat
qui fran-
geret eis.
Lament.
Jer. c. 4.

ven in the principals? for we cannot have a true Idea of Christian Eloquence, but from the holy Scripture, which is the first original.

§. II.

There is required (besides this reading of the Fathers, & a diligent study of Divinity, joyned with that Art of Eloquence, which is formed upon that of the Prophets, that the Preacher forms a morality, whereof the principles must be taken from the Gospel; for all other morality is no more than a certain Pagan probity, and pure Philosophy. This is not only to be found by the study of the Evangelists, but as well in the Epistles of Saint *Paul*, and in the Homilies of Saint *Chrysostome*, where it is so well explained: These Homilies ought to be the most ordinary study of the Preacher, whereof also he will find great instructions in Saint *Austin*, Saint *Jerome*, Saint *Gregory*,

Gregory the great, in Saint Bernard.
 This diligence ought not to be in
 the search after beautiful thoughts,
 and shining words, which is the fault
 of most young Preachers, which in
 truth conduce little to the edifica-
 tion of the People, or true com-
 punction of heart.

§. 12.

This true morality cannot be
 taken then from these pure and ho-
 ly sources, whereof I have spo-
 ken, especially in these times, where
 every one frames to himself morals
 according to his own fantasie; and
 we find so many extravagant Prea-
 chers, who impose from the Pulpit
 their own morose humours and four
 temperaments for pure morality,
 which are accompanied with the ri-
 diculous Visions, which their Spirit of
 novelty, or their preoccupation in-
 spires. Have we not seen some Prea-

H

chers

chers, who notwithstanding their profound ignorance in all that a Preacher ought to know, undertake a decision of all things, with the utmost rigour, and deliver, with the assurance of a Prophet and an unparalel'd confidence, the greatest absurdities in the World, and in matters of morality to hazzard every novelty, when the Smoak of their Zeal has once mounted to their heads

'Tis the custome of our Nation to run after all that is new, or that has any air of singularity; but when we have sounded the depth of those Preachers, who practice (to derive respect on their discourses) an affectation of severity on themselves, we shall find that they are not altogether so hard to themselves, as they are to others. Such a one was a young Doctor, who Preached five years ago before an honourable Audience; who who commenc'd his Sermon by
promi-

promising in a tone of a Reformer that he would Preach nothing but severe morality, and the pure rigour of the Gospel; and a little after he canted forth the story of the new Pope, wherein he forgot nothing that might rejoyce or give a subject for entertainment to the more sportive part of his Audience. Those that would Preach this severity must do as Jesus Christ has done, that is to say, Preach by his example. The Character of Christian severity is to be sweet to others and hard to our selves; to do otherwise is to play the Impostor or Comedian, not a Preacher. We have seen in this past age, false Zealots who made profession to preach a morality more rigid than others; during which they were lifting up their impure hands to Heaven, and fomenting error upon Earth. Finally, these Preachers who are so excessive, only because they are ignorant, and who make Enormities

and abominations of mere trifles, who will damn a Woman for wearing of Lace or colour'd Ribbons, or for having been a promenading upon a Festival day; these Preachers I say dishonour their ministry, by the excess of their sottish exaggerations; they discourage the faithful by making false Images of crime, and authorize Libertinism by these terrible *Ideas* they give of Verrue; whereby they render it more dreadful and salvage than it is.

§. 13.

The little success that most Preachers meet with, comes from the little care they have to understand the morals of our Religion; and the small Talent they have in dispensing it for nothing, so sensibly touches the Spirits, as the pourtracts which we make, when we makethem well, in which we are oft rendred wanting

wanting by a vain curiosity, and a too scrupulous kind of ratiocination. This way we take to shun the difficulty we find in the well painting of manners, which is a thing not only the most capable to attract admiration to the Orator, but also the most difficult to succeed in this, he must commence by a perfect knowledge of the heart of man, he must know the particular of all its motions; to make a true pourtrait, and to paint men so naturally that they may know themselves in the Pictures that are made of them. 'Tis in this that almost all Preachers are wanting, who represent false Images of manners to their Auditors, in making them too difficult, or too easie, so that they faile of the intended effect, for that the Images being false we know them not; and what he sayes is quite lost, because no person can take it as spoken to

himself; they Preach to the rich as to the poor, to the Courtier as to the Citizen, they make the morals of a City the Subject of a Village Sermon; and they make elaborate Sermons, where simple Catechismes and naked instructions are most proper. Every one knows the story, of the Preacher, who preached all the species of sin against the sixth Commandment, to a house of Religion. This is the most ordinary defect of the whole Clergy, because the necessary discernment, and understanding of the persons to whom they speak, and the perfect knowledge of the manners of men are Talents very rare; for the great experience of the world which he must have, joyned with the light of Philosophy and Divinity, (which are the first sources of this discernment) are the most essential to a Preacher, and I am perswaded

perswaded that none can succeed,
but according to the proportion of
his knowledge of the manners and
heart of man.

§. 14.

The heart of man is an abyſm of
unknown Depth ; whatſoever diſ-
coveries we make, ſtill there re-
mains ſomthing not yet diſcovered.
It is not alone ſufficient to make a
true picture, though we had ſo
much power of penetration, as to
know its impoſtures, deceits, diſſi-
mulations, weakneſſes, ſuſpitions, its
diſtaſts, jealousies, irrefolutions, its
ſeveral Meanders, and inequalities,
its delicateſſes which ſurmount inte-
reſt, its pride, preſumption, and
that confus'd Miſcellany of all its
affectiōns, and finally, its natural
and inconceivable propenſion to
malice and diſguiſement. He muſt
yet know how to take off the mask

H 4

of

of vertue, of candor, and sincerity, which are used in the more successful and refined exercises of dissimulation ; he must make him see that by his self love (against which all the Fathers have declaimed with so much heat.) and by a false modesty which he conceales from himself, the evil of his own intentions, to shun under this disguise the confusion that it would bring him. And as man hath not any vertue of himself, but on the contrary, his nature is corrupted with vice, he must shew him that the joy which he seems to have in the exercise of vertue, is but a counterfeit joy ; that he flatters himself with a false appearance of sorrow and Repentance in the exercise of Repentance ; that his Faith, his Hope, his Charity, and his other vertues, are no other than imaginary, where-with he amuses himself, and a deceitful tranquillity amidst the vain
and

and confused projects that he frames of his salvation. Finally, for to discover him wholly, and to give him a full prospect of his deformities, he must depaint to him his false modesties in the things he seeks after, his artificial excuses in what he flies, the perversity of his Judgment in what he esteems, the frailty of his resolutions, and the continual agitation and inquietudes in the pursuance of any good: I should never find an end, if I would discover all the changes and varieties of his thoughts. I have said enough to make out in general the principal source of all its motions, which ought to be the subject of a perpetual meditation to him who pretends to be distinguished from other Preachers: For in effect, the knowledg of this heart of man, more or less great, is almost the sole thing which makes the true distinction of the different Talents

Talents of Preaching, in the infinite number of divers manners that there are of preaching. The little care that most Preachers take to gain a perfect knowledg of man, is one of the most ordinary causes that there are so few in number of those that succeed ; for that when they speak things so much in the general, and descend not in the particular enumeration of Manners, none seem to be interested in what they say. It is this particularizing of morals, when it is natural, which gives success to the Preacher ; and as this secret is rare, so is the success also.

§. 15.

Besides this Morallity which is a part of Eloquence, which contributes the most to render it admirable ; the Art to excite the Passions contributes also not a little. For it
suffi-

sufficeth not to a Preacher to speak good things, but he must speak them well, and with a moving air; for when he sayes any thing thats touching, without seeming moved himself, 'tis only taken for a Grimace, wherewith he mocks his Audience. I once heard a Doctor, who preached with words very well chosen, and all that he said was very good; but he spoke it so coldly, without that action and heat that is necessary to work concernment, that he gave cause to the pleasant to say, that he could not be so calm, without being in some fashion resigned to the Reprobation of his Auditors, since he appear'd to take so little interest in what he said. And in truth, this cold and languishing manner of speaking upon the great subjects of the Gospel, is a great obstacle to the vertue of the Word of God, the which being not delivered at least with some
fort

sort of zeal and ardeur, failes of his expected fruit. But alas, how few Preachers are there, who at this day can boast that they have moved the least of their Auditors, by representing the horror of sin, and the greatness of the pains to which he is destined? Though we have known a *Jerome Savan* in *Flor.* one *Lewis* of *Grenada* in *Sevil*, and one *Delingendes* in *Paris*, (not to exclude som famous men of our own nation) who have made all their Auditors tremble whensoever they opened their mouthes of matters so terrible. Whence proceeds this, but from that languishing way of Preaching, whereof the manner is so little touching. It is remembred of a *Capucin* named *Philip* of *Narny*, who under the Pontificate of *Gregory 15.* preached at *Rome* with so much power, so much of action, and so much of zeal, that he never spoke in publick, that he made not mercy

cy to be cryed to the people through the streets when they went from the Sermon. It is likewise said, that having one day preach't before the Pope of the obligation that Bishops have to reside, he so terrified by the vehemence of his discourse, thirty Bishops who were at the Sermon, that the very next day they posted to their several Diocesses. These great effects are wrought by an extraordinary talent in pronounciation, to which eloquence oftentimes owes all the doing of its miracles, especially amongst the common people, whose apprehensions are too gross to be moved by Eloquence, but only as it is sensible: Such is this ardent and pathetick kind of declamation: this is a thing very little studied because it demands so much diligence and application, whereof very few persons are capable, and for which reason the greatest part of Preachers scarce ever think on't.

§. 16.

It is but too true, that few Preachers allow themselves time to the exercise of pronunciation to form it true, and to grace it with suitable action; they think altogether on other things; they study the Fathers, they study Rhetorick, they study the Tongues, but they neglect the study of this Art of action, which only hath the power to animate what he says, and to give an agreement necessary to ingage the attention of the Auditor. The negligence of this part is alone capable to render all the other unprofitable; but yet after all this, there are in this, as in other things, some extremities to be fear'd and avoided: For those Preachers who are all passionate, and who begin their Exordiums in thunder, least they should seem to be wanting in any thing, ruine all by giving themselves too much to their humour

upon Eloquence.

CIII

humour. It is good to make them comprehend that they never were less capable to move, than when they most striv'd to do so. I have sometimes seen a Preacher who was of this humour, who notwithstanding preach't with very good success: indeed he had a rare talent, and many tracts in his discourse which did exceedingly affect the spirits: His way of speaking was very strong, and his whole aire was vehement, but he lost these great advantages by a too great passion that he had to move, and to make vehement discourses against the Times, so that his declamation became too full of Transport, his gestures too expressive, and his countenance too Comædian; finally, his manner was so very much corrupted by the Grimaces, and violent agitations and constraints of his whole body, that all his motions became so many real Convulsions. A

Preacher

Preacher must shun these extravagant transports of zeal, which become blameable as oft as they are excessive; he must therefore consider well this rule, that he never moves less, than when he betrays this too earnest desire to his Auditors: it seems but a false passion which indures so long; and that zeal becomes suspected, which is continued with so much heat, and whereof the Preacher makes too great ostentation.

§. 17.

There is in most a too great desire to please without putting themselves to the trouble of working real concernments in their Auditors; this is another extremity which ought to be avoided: For he that would perfectly succeed in preaching must commence by moving first the heart before he think
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to please: What way he should take to effect this, I have already described. I deny not but that there may be found in this Age a species of good sense joyned with excellent things, but by a too great passion that most have to please, they bring themselves in danger to loose the true fruit of things, by a too careful search after the flower: For that which pleases opens the heart and dissipates the spirits, which only profits by its close entertainment, and he looses what is solid by a too eager pursuit of what is agreeable. It is without doubt from that disposition of spirit that there are so many Preachers who endeavour more to please than to persuade, and who introduce into the Pulpit all those various gustos, which reign in the world, which they make their study, that they may appear the more *al a mode*. We have lately seen many Preach-

ers of this kind, who prepare themselves to go to a Sermon, as to a Ball; where he meets all the fair world assembled, whom he entertains with the morality in fashion, delivered in an amorous stile, and with an aire very lascivious: What is the effect of these agreeable Sermons but the dissipation of the spirits, than which there is nothing more opposed to devotion. Unhappiness be to these Preachers *à la mode*: The Evangelists nor the Apostles did not thus: What indecency is it to preach the severities of our Religion, the abjection of Christianity, and the contempt of the Cross with an aire undisturbed, and with fine and studied expressions, and to mix these feeble ornaments with the greatness and majesty of our Religion? This is the most ordinary defect of those who preach to persons of Quality; they amuse themselves to make Religion

Religion agreeable to the manners of those, whom they ought to terrifie, in letting them understand that their condition hath an essential opposition to Salvation, and that they find not any tract or footstep of the Gospel, or of true Christianity in the life that they lead at Court. It is true, he ought to have compassion on their blindness, who are poyson'd with a pestilential aire which reigns amongst them. But this ought so much the more to excite the Preacher to speak the Truth: For we are taught by the Fathers, that the Court alwayes followed the manners of their Preachers; if they were holy, it shal'd not to be holy also.

§. 18.

There are some others who fail of success, because their respects are too humane and too interest'd;

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they are more attentive to their own establishment, than to the Salvation of their Auditors; they preach themselves, and not Jesus Christ. Let those Preachers reflect, that the great success the of Apostles came (as *St. Chrysostome* saith) from their disinterestment. *St. Paul* perfected an entire conversion upon the people, because he pretended no benefit by his Sermons: But it happens sometimes to those who have resigned all their temporal hopes in renouncing the world, yet have no power to subdue this foolish vanity, which makes the Preacher labor too much after reputation; who after he has renounced all, cannot, without much pain, renounce the pleasure of being prais'd. Let the Preacher that would cure himself of this weakness, consider (if all these praises that are given him were sincere, which they scarce ever are,) that he has but preach't very
indiffer-

indifferently, whilst he has left still a liberty to his Auditors to say that he has done well, and that his preaching is not to much purpose; whilst he hath given them leave to say that he hath preached agreeably, he has only given them a little pleasure, but no fruit. The greatest praises of a Preacher is the silence of his Auditors, and when they rise all pensive from their seats after Sermon, and depart from the Church without speaking a word, this is a sure mark that they are nearly touched. and that they think on what they heard. This agrees with what the Great *Symachus* in one of his Epistles said to the Emperours *Theodosius* and *Arcadius*: (The greatness of our admiration and astonishment seals up our tongues, and deprives us of the power to praise) An example of this I have seen at the Sermon of a Preacher, who preach't in a manner so ve-

Magnitudo stuporis locum plausibus non relinquit.
Lib. 10.
Epist. 22.

hement and touching, that when they departed from the Sermon, the astonishment of the Auditors, and the compunction of heart which they suffered, imposed a general silence, which spoke loud to his advantage. I cannot forbear the relation of an Adventure which happened to me a few years ago. I went to hear a Sermon one day in Lent to the Court; the Preacher that day preach't upon the passion of our Lord with an aire very brisk and polish't: The Ladies from time to time lift up their eyes to heaven during his discourse, saying, *that was excellently express'd! that was graciously spoken!* whilst I was almost mad with indignation to hear him discourse so pleasantly in a subject so worthy compassion, and take so much pains to please his Auditors, whom he ought to have endeavoured to affect with grief and compunction. There is one other
vanity

vanity yet more foolish and deplorable. When those that have gained a reputation of good men, and to be excellent in this Art, they attribute to themselves the glory and success of their persuasions, when they have done no more than what is effected by the impression of the voice, and the exterior part of speech upon the heart: Our Religion teaches us, that it is the holy Spirit alone which does the rest.

§. 19.

Another cause of the ill success in preaching, is the Preachers being too much abandon'd to himself, without ever thinking to implore the assistance and succours of heaven; whereby he is driven to mix his own imaginations and weaknesses with the grandeur and sanctity of our Mysteries: like that impertinent Preacher, who preach't

one day very miserably before a reverend Bishop, making this complement after Sermon, *that he was forced to abandon himself to the holy Spirit, because he had been allowed but a little time for preparation: Adding that hereafter he hoped to acquit himself better.* There is something so great and elevated, which I know not how to name, in our Mysteries, that it suffices to expose them simply, and without Art, to the people, to merit all the glory that can be hoped from Eloquence, (were it honest to preach for Reputation.

§. 20.

He treats unworthily the Word of God, who debases himself to the childish amplifications of petty subjects, and to meer trifles, amongst the great number of important matters which furnish our Religion; following

following the example of those trifling Preachers, who spend their Zeal against Paintings, Garnitures, Dresses, and other vanities of Women. A good man begins by throwing a terror into our Souls, by a remembrance of the Judgments of God, and making us tremble by proclaiming the dreadful consequences of our Sins; this is the most powerful means to extirpate Luxury, and the most capable to introduce Modesty in our Habits and Behaviour: He does but trifle, that thinks to effect it any other way. And in truth, in so great and rich abundance of great matters which the Gospel affords, he must have a very low spirit who can stay and busie himself about such trivial subjects. I know not by what unhappiness our Preachers become sonugatory in the great subjects they have to treat; when the antient Pagans were even great and elevated

ted in the least things that they had to say.

I am ashamed when I read the Oration of *Eschines* against *Ctesiphon*, where that Orator makes shine with so much Art the power of a Pagan Eloquence in these Trifles. *We* (says he) *are come to the Feast of Corbeils; the Victims are upon the Altars, the Sacrifice is ready, and you are all prepared to beg of the Gods what is necessary for the State; But consider before with what voice, with what spirit, and with what assurance you can present your Vows, if you leave the Impiety of those who have violated their Mysteries, unpunish'd. See how much spirit, and how much greatness there is in so little a subject, in comparison of that languor and weakness of most part of our Preachers; who instead of being elevated by the Majesty and Greatness of our Mysteries, amuse themselves*

selves in little things, because they have not that force of spirit to fasten upon the greater; The grave and serious kind is the character most essential to the Pulpit, which admits of nothing that is low, cold, trivial, or childish; to obtain this he must imitate the Apostle, who in lieu of busying himself in the search of prophane Ornaments, made all his Art and all his Eloquence out of the continual meditation of the greatness of Jesus Christ: *Non doctas fabulas seculi, notam fecimus nobis Jesu Christi virtutem, speculatores facti illius magnitudinis.*

§. 21.

The most refined and sublime matters are not the most proper for preaching; but on the contrary, those that are the most edifying and simple: For these reasons we ought to blame that extravagancy of wit which

which reigns in this age, and labours after curious designs, and ingenious distributions and division of discourse, which gains so much approbation from the Ladies. Such was that division of the Preacher, who preaching on the suffering of our Saviour, thought he had acquitted himself very dexterously, when he had shewn in two parts of his discourse, *The pleasures in sufferings,* and the *sufferings in pleasures.* This affectation in discourse appears so childish, smells so much of the Scholler and Declamator, and so little of the gravity of the Pulpit, that it is pittied by every one who has the least use of their reason; for in those studied oppositions there is seldom any thing that is solid; though sometime possibly they may be witty, yet the parts are oftentimes comprehended the one in the other, when they are exactly discuss'd: And this contains but one and the same

same thing in effect, though they are two in appearance. Beside, they often weaken the Subject by this too curious care to give it an agreeable variety, which would be more strong if it were more natural.

It is for the most part the younger Preachers who seek after this fineness in the division of their discourses. It was not the manner of *St. Chrysostome*, nor those great men of the Church; they found the most common distributions, as being most natural, alwayes the best; they had a noble contempt of the reputation of being witty in these kind of things, which only can succeed by being natural, by their simplicity, and by the strength of the reasons that recommend them.

p. 22.

Nothing so much contributed to the great success the Apostles had in preaching the Gospel, than their own practise of it; their example was the best instruction, and their preachings were rendered more powerful by their humility, by their mortification, and by their poverty, than by their reasonings or Discourse. And indeed the most effectual way of persuasion to Christianity, is by the Life and Manners of those that preach. It was the Eloquence of Jesus Christ, first to practise himself what he taught. He that preaches a severe morality, with a cheerful and vermilion countenance, will not easily persuade to what he exhorts; for he gives cause to believe that he practiseth not what he teacheth, and his visage destroyes
his

his Reasons. All the world hath seen the little success of some, who could not by all the emotion of their zeal, make the least impression, because the rigour of their morality had diminished nothing from their thriving Carcases; for the Auditors oftentimes regard more his Countenance, than his Reasons. The Countenance of the Preacher gives not a little consolation to those who cannot accommodate themselves to that severity, which these sanguine Complexions dispense with so much zeal. I do not say but that the people whose understandings are dull, may be imposed upon; but the exterior part cannot do it, for they judge according to appearance; and though the Preacher may speak never so great a truth, if his Manners be suspected, his Reasons will be so also. It is sometimes necessary to speak little, to persuade much;

much ; for all appears false that a Preacher sayes, if he have once the reputation of one that will amplify.

§. 23.

*Imposui
mus popu-
lo oratores
viri sumus.
Cic. in
Brut.*

Every one is very well persuaded of the Reflection that I come to make, That the most ordinary Artifice of Preachers is to impose on their Auditors, and to make themselves appear what they are not. The morality that they practise is so much the more severe, as that which they practise is sweet and commodious ; and because in preaching the Gospel he must necessarily edifie his Auditors to maintain the dignity of his Ministry, he is constrained to take upon him at least the appearances of severity ; whilst the sweetness of the life he leads, convinces us of the little disposition he hath to a real Mortification.

fication. But of all these pretended Zelots, who would be distinguished by the severity of the morals they deliver, the most dangerous sort are those shallow and presumptuous Devot's, who preach to the people Chimerical Devotions, and their own Fantastick Visions, who without distinguishing what is essential from what is not, they bring all things to the last extremity. I know some that have this Art to impose, without understanding any thing of fineness or subtlety, by a strong natural imagination, which is fed by the little Light they receive from the reading of the Gospel: So that it is not the Spirit that is alwayes Master; it resigns it self up to the conduct of the Imagination; and as oft as that is transported, all that the Spirit saith by its impression, is so also. A Preacher must avoyd this with a particular care, or else he will

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make

make very strange disorders amongst the people, but especially amongst the Women, who are naturally feeble and ignorant; for the more extravagant a Preacher is, and the more extraordinary his Conduct, by so much he is rendred more capable to make the greater disturbance: This disorder is but too frequent in this Age, as well as in that of the false Devot's whose vertues were all counterfeit, which hath given occasion to decry so very much that devotion, whereby they have made at present in the world a species of Intrigue, and a manner of profession to be distinguish't from others. But they cannot be very devout, who seek only to distinguish themselves by a bare profession, that they make to be so.

p. 24.

How many Preachers are there, who by the vehemence of their discourse, seem to throw stones at the heads of their Auditors, to compel them to amend their faults, and scarce ever think of preaching those to which themselves are subject? They study the Fathers Divinity and Rhetorick, and all things else that may contribute to render them renowned. In fine, they study all things, but the knowledge of themselves: Their illpronunciation, their ^{mi}ndes, their grimaces, their action, their gestures so little conformable to a true decorum, and whatsoever else that is violent in their persons and outward behaviour, to suffer to stick to them, they, without any care of Reformation, by this negligence of their persons: they corrupt oftentimes their best natural qualities,

ties, which possibly might contribute to render them more successful and profitable, if they would give themselves the trouble to think on it: For how can they so much neglect this, without making it believed, that they yet more neglect their Auditors? what respect can we have for what they say, when we have no difference for their persons. We have seen not long ago, a Preacher of this kind, who could not put off his air of the Village, whereby he corrupted his other talents, because he would not take the pains to amend it.

§. 25.

A Christian Preacher ought to shun nothing so carefully as that which is too glistering, either in words or thoughts; he must know how to speak in a stile polish'd without affectation. All that is studied

d and artificial is false, and little agreeable to the eloquence of the Pulpit; his discourse ought to be simple, reasonable, and natural, to which the commerce with the Italian and Spanish Simonists, is very contrary. This reading of the Moderns does but amuse him, because he knows not the Antients; and he frames to himself a false Idea of that Eloquence, whose true Character is very much opposed to what is studied, dazeling and witty. The true Eloquence of the Pulpit ought not to endeavour to sustain it self but by the greatness of the Subjects of which it treats, by its simplicity, and by its reasons: He does but weaken it, who pretends to adorn it with the Riches of the Pagans. The Preacher ought to banish from the Pulpit all Citations of prophane Authors, all reflections upon their Maximes, and all their stories, as unworthy of so sacred a Subject.

The holy Scripture is rich enough to furnish him with Ornaments of all kinds which are of use to this Eloquence; when he has well meditated it, he will find plenty of Reasons and Examples to strengthen and establish his discourse; all other Authorities ought to have no place in the Pulpit, as too estranged, and too little conformable to the Sanctity of his Character. A Preacher, which ought not to put in usuage any thing, but what is holy, ought to be extreamly scrupulous in serving himself with any thing that is not so: He must also fly the affectation of making the entrance of his discourse too glistering, whose fair thoughts surprize and dazle the spirits of their Auditors, but are very far from having that unction which accompanies the Word of God, reducing it to a dryness, which renders it sterile, and unfruitful.

p. 26.

Finally, the most essential character of this Eloquence, which we likewise so miserably neglect, is the Art to allot divers dayes to the same thoughts, which is done by varying them after different manners; for that the common people, which usually makes the greater number, whereof every Audience is compos'd, wants prompt and easie conceptions: So that it is to great purpose (if the Preacher would have them reap any fruit or profit) that he propose the truth of the Gospel in such a manner as may insinuate little by little into their spirits, and to dispose in order their impressions upon their hearts and resolutions; which cannot be effected, but by those variations that he must give to the same proposition, to imprint them more deep in the

spirits of his Hearers, insinuating by frequent repetitions the same things under different forms of speech. It was thus that St. *Chrysostome* preach't in the first Ages of the Church, and the famous *Grénaide* in this last Age: Both which have been the most perfect models that can be proposed to a Preacher. A discourse (to answer this Character) must not be over-charg'd with matter, lest it too much oppress the Auditor. That rapid Eloquence, which so much pleases the lesser wits, and is only recommendable for its impetuosity and transport, is not at all proper for the people, who have neither so much penetration of spirit, or promptitude to keep pace with it, and retain its fruit. I cannot forbear to note, that some Preachers owe all their success to the weakness and ignorance of the Auditors; but that success ought not to authorize an evil custom, because

cause that it happens only from the little reason and stupidity of those to whom they speak.

§. 27.

The choice of matters we ought to treat of in the Pulpit, is of a greater importance than we commonly think it is. We seldom consider the great Importance in the choice of matters which ought to be treated of in the Pulpit: They fall into an ill custom, who upon that portion of the Gospel which they propose, preach only what others have done before: The choicest Preachers know how to distinguish themselves from the indifferent; in effect it is one of the essential talents of great Genius's to make choice of great Subjects in all the matters that they treat of, to which they know how to add that natural variety that it ought to have: For as every Subject

Subject is only great so far as it is solid: All that passes the test of a Preacher, who hath a great and firm Judgment, becomes proportionably solid, and whatsoever is so, is alwayes proper to preach. But because this talent is rare, and common Preachers are much wanting in the choice of worthy Subjects, I have thought it not unprofitable to propose some of them, that may be the most proper to this Eloquence of the Pulpit.

1. The Greatness and Majesty of God, as it is described in the Prophets, and in other places of Scripture. To give an Idea of him to the greatest part of Christians, who know so little of him, the Preacher must render him terrible to the wicked, and amiable to the good; and so (by making him appear such as he is) they both may be equally edified.

2. The

2. The truth of our Religion, which has been attested by the wisest men of the world, and those which were most exempted from Interest or Passion, and has never been contested but by those whose sentiments were corrupted by the contagion of their manners.

3. The necessity and importance of Salvation, and the difficulty to attain to it, by reason of the uncertainty of death, which oftentimes surprizes us in our disobedience.

4. The greatness of the act of Redemption, and the unspeakable bounties of our Saviour, the acknowledgments and thanks that we owe to him, and which he hath merited of us by his Sufferings; and by the effusion of his Blood.

5. The unprofitableness of the life of most part of Christians, especially the rich, who do so little to gain Heaven; which being proposed only as a conquest, cannot be gained

ed by sloth and softness of life, as is that of Courtiers and Ladies.

6. The terrible account that he must render to God of his mispent life, and the use of those graces that he bestowed on him, when he receives from death his last arrest.

7. The Sanctity of the Mysteries of our Religion, as that of the Resurrection; which is the establishment of our Faith: the Ascension, which is the motive of our Hope, by the assurance of a Mediator with God; the descent of the Holy Spirit, which is the ground of our Charity, and the love we owe to God, by a bond so holy.

8. The greatness and dignity of the name of Christian, which we receive at our Baptism; which consists in the honour we have to become the Children of God by Adoption, and in the right to inherit the Kingdom of Heaven: This
right

right, and that honour is a thing so glorious, that we cannot give an Idea great enough to a Christian, nor make him well comprehend the obligation that such a name layes upon him, to lead his life answerably in all purity and holiness.

9. The frequent Elogy of our Faith, which only can calm the inquietudes, and the eternal Agitations of curiosity, to which the spirit of man is subject, and which is capable to sweeten the perpetual troubles of this life, by giving us a clear prospect of the Recompences which we hope for, *fide sperandarum substantia verum.*

10. The holy use that we ought to make of the Sacraments, which are the most essential things in our Religion; he must show in that usage, what perfection the quality of a Christian (which we receive by our Baptism) doth ob-
liege

liege us; he must make him understand that penitence is a sincere Reconciliation with God, which obliges us to a true Repentance for our offences, and a firm resolution to offend no more: He must explain, that the Eucharist is not only the sacred nourishment of souls, but that it ought to be taken as a lively Image to refresh in us the memory of that great act of Redemption which ought never to be effaced from the heart of a Christian: That Marriage is not only a Christian society of man and woman, but also a means to elevate Christians to acknowledge and honour God: And in this manner to explain all the Sacraments.

11. The sufferings, humiliations, contradictions and poverty, which are the blessings of Christian Religion, and the most certain paths that lead to Heaven; as wealth and greatness are the greatest obstacles.

12. To

12. To stir up in the faithful that spirit of fear and trembling, in which they must travel to their salvation, according to the advertisement of the Apostle: It is good to proclaim in the eares of sinners the terrour of the Judgments of God, to awaken them from that sleepiness into which their crimes have plunged them ; and to raise a fear even in the better Christians, by representing the peril to which they expose themselves, by neglecting the least Graces which they receive from God, who severely punisheth the least contempt or mis-employment of them.

13. The confidence in God which he must excite by frequent Discourses upon his Providence, which we are not very apt to acknowledge, by reason of the ill habitude we have got to impute all evenements to Chance, or to our own industry, without reflecting
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on what we are taught in the Gospel, *that there falls not a hair of our Heads*, that is to say, there arrives nothing in the world, how indifferent soever it appears to our eyes, but by order of Providence, which we ought to acknowledge and adore in whatever comes to pass, if we would render our Duty and Obedience compleat.

14. The obedience and perfect submission we owe to the Church, and the authority of its Decisions; without which no society can subsist; and because it is the Rule of what we ought to believe, and of what we ought to practise, without which we are alwayes exposed to the mercy of our extravagant imaginations, and our changeable and unbridled desires; and Religion, which ought to be the most sure and establishd thing in the World, becomes the most light and inconstant.

15. The

15. The vertue of the Word of God, which converts sinners, and humbles the wise of the World by the mouth of Babes and Ignorants.

16. The Panegyricks of the Saints, which they must propose to the Faithful as the true Models of that perfection which God demands of them according to their divers Conditions and Vocations.

17. Finally, the strange misery of the most part of Mankind, especially of great men, who run after falsity and mistake, and who occupy their minds in Chimera's and illusions, whereof they serve themselves to maintain the Maximes of their Libertinism.

There are a great number of other Subjects of equal importance with these, as that essential Character of a Christian, which is the Love of our Neighbour, with an

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universal

universal Charity, which doth not exclude our greatest Enemies; the pardon of injuries; conformity to the Will of God in our adversity; alms; the distrust of our selves; the good use of our time, and a faithful employment of our Graces, penitence, humane respects, which are so contrary to the profession of Christianity, the horreur of sin, the care of our salvation, the omnipresence of God, fervency in his Service, prayer; and all things that are most capable to move the hearts, and contribute to the edification of the people, we must above all things endeavour: He cannot too often propose to the people the innocence of manners, which the sanctity of our Religion requires, which cannot easily be attained, but a by holy retreat, and a love of solitude. The commerce of the world, how holy soe're it be, infects the heart with a contagion,

gion, which will corrupt our manners in spite of all our precaution. The purity of Christian Religion is so great, that we cannot attain any perfection in it, but by a desertion and holy separation from the world, and from men. This is that which the great Martyr of Sicily Saint *Agatha* had so well learned, when she blest'd God with all her heart, that he had taken from her the spirit and care of the world. (*Qui tulisti a me amorem seculi.*) In effect there is no man so good as he that lives conceal'd ; and the most secret way is the most secure to arrive at Heaven.

It remains (to atchieve fully these Reflections) that I propose some Model (Those who have good natural disposition for this Eloquence, may frame themselves.) To effect this, I have given two examples of the most perfect Preachers that I have known in this Age ; though

their accomplishments may appear miraculous, yet those who have heard them speak, will acknowledge, that I have not represented them greater than they really were; and that those whom I have described are not only Preachers in Idea, but such as were so indeed, without which I might be suspected to impose and amplify.

The first had the greatest natural disposition for Eloquence that I have seen; his person was graceful, his visage was very agreeable, he was grave and modest, and all his outward behaviour was very taking: his voice was not the most excellent, but very clear and intelligible, and I know not, so insinuating, as irresistably ingaged the attention. The qualities of his spirit were answerable; he had a great penetration and exquisite understanding, a strong reason, an easie comprehension, a fine imagination, and a judgment

judgment very solid ; his learning consisted in a perfect knowledge of Divinity, which enabled him to decide all matters clearly, and without ambiguity: To this he had joyned a perfect knowledge of the Fathers, of which he made use with so much happiness and address, that they seem'd to have been writ purposely for him: But nothing contributed so much to the renown of his learning, as that admirable Eloquence, wherein he was extreamly happy ; he could make what impression he pleased upon his Auditors, by a pleasing variety he gave to every thing: His reasons so mutually supported each other, that the last was alwayes more strong than the first; and besides, he had nothing false or sophistical in his reasonings, but all exceeding solid ; the force of his discourse increasing by degrees, the nearer it approach'd to the end, striking the spirit with more

vigour at the conclusion, than at the beginning. Finally, his true talent was to enlighten fully the understanding, and to touch yet more sensibly the heart : all his discourse was a marvelous illumination of the matters whereof he treated ; and after he had cast into the spirit the seed of the movements that he proposed ; by the wonderful power that he had, he set in an instant all the engines of the soul on work, by those movements that he judg'd most capable to be touched, and inflamed the heart by all the heat and ardeur of the passions, whereof he perfectly knew the art by a peculiar Rhetorick that he had formed : they hearkned to his Sermons with pleasure, because it enter'd into their minds by this pleasing artifice ; and he never preach't so long, but his Auditors could have wished his Sermon longer ; and they never apprehended him near his conclusion

conclusion without a very sensible Regret : For in those moments that he took possession of their hearts, he became absolute master to do what he pleas'd ; he had this Art in so eminent a degree, that I have known some Libertines, who could not resolve to hear him, out of fear of being constrained to render themselves to his reasons ; for who-soever heard, became without resistance, his captive : But nothing spoke so much to his advantage, as the profound silence of his Auditors. When he had finished his Sermon, one might alwayes have seen them rise from their seats with their countenances pale and disfigured, with their eyes heavy and dejected, and to depart from the Church strangely moved, and pensive, without saying a word, especially in the most touching Subjects ; and when he took occasion to speak of what was terrible he shewed, that

he had the same reflections with that great Master of this Art, *Naturaliter plus valet apud plurimum timor malorum, quam spes bonorum.* The spirits of the people are less sensible to the hopes of good, than to the fear of evil: This made him alwayes say, that a Preacher should generally preach terror, and this indeed was his chief Character; but as he sometimes preached out of humour, to which the greatest men are subject, he had in certain subjects such a heaviness of spirit as would not have without difficulty been understood, without that touching and pathetick Air, which was his first talent.

The other Preacher that I have known, had an equal natural disposition, and I dare say all the learning of the former, but he possess't it in a very different manner: I never saw more of Art in any Orator, nor never more diligence to conceal it; for under the appearance of a simplicity

plicity and negligence, he cover'd the greatest Art that ever was. This negligence was accompanied with so many graces, that alwayes charm'd, because his Auditors were persuaded by his manner of speech, that he thought of nothing less. His sovereign Talent, was the secret that he had found to make it believ'd that all his Art was natural, because that it was couched under the most studied negligence in the world, so that his Audience easily abandoned themselves to the pleasure that they took in hearing him; they suffer'd themselves to be lead without caution, or any resistance; as his reasons were strong, and as he knew how to expose them with all their powers, they made extraordinary and proportionable impressions; but his manner of delivering them was so pleasing, that they could not understand them without being ravished: This was the ordinary

nary effect of that Eloquence which was less in the words and things, than in the manner of ordering and speaking them: And as he had an Art to please in all that he said, and that when he spoke he seem'd season'd with the graces which he had delivered; he became sovereignly Eloquent, for thereby he never fail'd of perswading; he knew how to mix the force of his reasons with Authority, and with a temper which adorned all that he said, insomuch that he led the spirit of his Auditors in Triumph which way he pleased, because they could not defend themselves from the pleasure by which he surprized them: All his Morals were correct, because his reason was so; the Subjects that he treated of were alwayes rendred great by the importance of those Truths whereof they were composed; he had nothing false in his thoughts, nor superfluous in his words;

words; and when he made any digression, he alwayes returned to his Subject with all imaginable facility, and without the least maim in the sense or connexion. By these agreeable wayes he went more directly to the heart, than the other, who fetched a larger circuit, making his way first through the Spirit: One was indeed more moved and struck by the force and vehemence of the former; but more charmed, penetrated, and surprized by the graces and agreements of the second. After all, both the one and the other were fully accomplished in the Character that they assumed, and in that Eloquence which they had formed to themselves. A Preacher so perfect as these were, whose Images I have drawn, is one of the greatest gifts that God can bestow on his Church, because it is a means to sanctifie whole Provinces and Realms, by reforming the Licentious, and the

the irregularity of manners which reigns amongst the People. This is that sacred leaven, which God by the care of his Providence hath opposed to all the corruptions which have course in the world. So that I believe the few good Preachers that we find in these dayes proceeds from the little care they take to ask of God these kind of Graces, which cannot be sought with too much passion. Let us then pour out our tears at his holy Altars with a lively Faith, with ardent Vows, and with a long perseverance. Let us alwayes make to God that Prayer that he commended to his Apostles, which after their example we are bound to practice.

*Messis quidem multa operarii
vero pauci rogat; ergo Dominum Mes-
sis ut mittat operarios in messem suam,
Luke cap. 10.*

Thus

Thus I have finish'd these few Reflections. I have chosen this Method, that I might not seem to speak like a Master of a Science which is no less universal than delicate: I might be justly accused of presumption, if I pretended to give my Opinions as Rules from my self; on the contrary, I confess I have drawn some of them from the writings of the best Oraors, and some I may modestly challenge as the result of my own observation upon the little conformity I have found amongst the Orators of this Age, to those ancient Precepts of Demosthenes, Cicero, and Quintilian; whom if I have not cited so often as I approved their Opinions, it is not that I would have attributed to my self any part of the glory that is their due, but to avoid breaking the thred of my Discourse by too frequent Citations. The death of the most excellent Mr. Cowly is very much to be lamented, which with that of his Life, gave an unhappy period

od to the design he had conceived to give us the pattern of several Stiles fitted for several Subjects: His example might have put some bounds to that Poetick rage, from whose invasion our holy places have not escaped: Certainly none knew better than he, how modestly to confine that Wanton: And in this it may be truly affirmed, he hath left very few successors. The Stiles of our most witty men, seem the dictates of the same spirit which inspires them in their raptures. Though our Common Laws allow but very little place to this Art, yet methinks the desire of glory should inflame them; and the care to support the Majesty of our Law, and the Dignity of its Professors, should ingage the Students to lay out some time in the acquisition of this Art, and those gentler Sciences that compleat an Orotar. But so far are they now from it, that when they enter upon that Study, they think it necessary to bid adieu to all those Sciences

ences which teach Humanity, Modesty, and sweetens Conversation. How miserable a thing is it, and how ridiculous to hear in common discourse Plato and Cicero cited out of Cook and Plowden; as if the treasures of the Greek and Roman wisdom were to be found couched in those mangled fragments. I know not why it should be inconsistent in a well formed and tempered mind to mix these beautiful Studies with those which are more severe; this I am sure would add to the honour of our Laws, the want of which renders them deformed and despised. For though our Law deserves those just commendations, by which it is prefer'd to all the Laws of the world, yet *lex est mutus Magistratus*, saith Cicero, the Law of it self is dumb, and speaks not, but by the tongue of a learned and eloquent Lawyer. Much might be said in commendation of our Language, which possibly equals the most celebrated

lebrated in Europe in the plenty of
soft, grave and majestick expressions,
fit for all arguments: But since it is
a Subject fit for another Discourse, I
omit further enlarging upon it.

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FINIS..

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